

**A Study of Possibilities for Translanguaging in Vocational Training: Student Perceptions
at a Vocational Training Centre in Namibia**

by

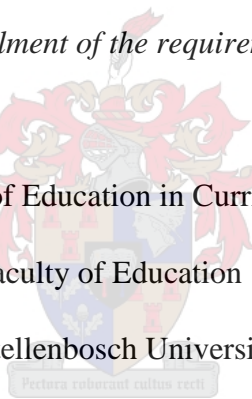
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DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to determine the students' perceptions toward the use of home language from the perspective of translanguaging practices at Okakarara Vocational Training Centre (OVTC). Also, this study explored the possible advantages and disadvantages of using other languages alongside English. This was done in order to determine the enabling spaces (affordances) available for translanguaging as a teaching and learning strategy that would improve the students' understanding of the subject better and engage them actively in the learning process.

A quantitative survey research methodology was applied where 331 students participated in the study. The 331 students completed the structured self-administered questionnaire distributed to them by a colleague. The descriptive data was collected and entered first into Microsoft Excel and exported to SPSS software for extensive data cleaning and analysis. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the reliability of the instrument that was used to collect data. Descriptive statistics, particularly modal values were produced, and data was presented in bar graph and table form. Chi-square correlations were used to establish the relationship between variables at 5% (0.05) significance level.

This study reveals that students feel more comfortable when they use English in the classrooms. It also shows that English helps them to communicate with other people and lecturers since they do not speak the same home language. English also allows students to have access to global development opportunities and academic materials worldwide. Students supported the use of English as an official endorsement of the Namibian language policy in the schools including the Vocational Training sector, which stipulates that English is an official language to be used as the language of learning and teaching (LoLT). However, a major challenge unveiled by students was that English could be an obstacle in their academic work since they are not fluent in English. Also, most of the time students used their home language to communicate at home and school during break time and this affected them to an extent that some of the students failed to evaluate whether the LoLT has an impact on their academic performance. In addition, students indicated that if they learned in their home language, they were likely to find it easier to understand difficult English

academic terms. Moreover, students believed that the use of translation would improve their academic performance and understanding. On the other hand, the use of both languages (English and home language) could be challenging to both students and lecturers because not all of them share the same home language. Finally, students are not in agreement that the use of home language alongside English would be bad for academic performance but rather students' outcome performance would be successful when a local language is used as a LoLT.

Therefore, the study recommends that the management of Okakarara Vocational Training Centre (OVTC) should conduct a feasibility study on the possibilities of including translanguaging practices in classrooms. The study also recommends that the trainers' perceptions on translanguaging be assessed and a detailed study be carried out to explore the challenges in using multiple languages in classrooms in schools and VET level.

AFRIKAANSE OPSOMMING

Die hoofdoel van hierdie studie was om studente se persepsies omtrent die gebruik van huistaal te bepaal vanuit die perspektief van *translanguaging* praktyke by Okakarara Beroepsopleidingsentrum in Namibië. Hierdie studie het ook die moontlike voor- en nadele van die gebruik van ander tale tesame met Engels verken. Dit is gedoen om vas te stel watter magtigende ruimtes (geleenthede) beskikbaar is vir *translanguaging* as 'n onderrig- en leerstrategie wat studente se begrip van die vak sou verbeter en hulle aktief sou betrek by die leerproses.

'n Kwantitatiewe opname is as navorsingsmetodologie toegepas en 331 studente het aan die studie deelgeneem. Die 331 studente het 'n gestruktureerde, selftoegepaste vraelys voltooi wat deur 'n kollega aan hulle uitgedeel is. Beskrywende data is versamel en eers in Microsoft Excel ingevoer, waarna dit na SPSS sagteware uitgevoer is vir breedvoerige skoonmaak en analise. Cronbach se alfa is gebruik om die betroubaarheid te bepaal van die instrument wat gebruik is om data te versamel. Beskrywende statistieke, veral modale waardes, is geproduseer en data is in grafieke en tabelle aangebied. Chi-vierkant korrelasies is gebruik om die verhouding tussen die veranderlikes te bepaal teen 'n beduidendheidsvlak van 5% (0.05).

Hierdie studie onthul dat studente meer gemaklik voel wanneer hulle Engels in die klaskamers gebruik, asook dat dit hulle help om met ander mense en dosente te kommunikeer omdat hulle nie dieselfde huistaal praat nie. Engels laat ook studente toe om toegang te verkry tot globale ontwikkelingsmoontlikhede en tot Engelse akademiese materiaal wêreldwyd. Studente het die gebruik van Engels ondersteun as 'n amptelike bekragtiging van die Namibiese taalbeleid in skole, insluitende die beroepsopleiding-sektor, wat stipuleer dat Engels 'n amptelike taal is wat gebruik word as die taal van leer en onderrig. Aan die een kant het studente die uitdaging onthul dat Engels 'n struikelblok sou wees in hul akademiese werk omdat hulle Engels minder vlot is. Studente het ook meestal hulle huistaal gebruik om by die huis en tydens pouses by die skool te kommunikeer. Dit het hulle beïnvloed tot die mate dat sommige van die studente nie aangedui het of die taal van leer en onderrig 'n impak het op hul akademiese prestasie nie. Studente het ook aangedui dat hulle meer waarskynlik sou wees om moeilike Engelse akademiese terme makliker te verstaan indien

hulle in hul huistaal sou leer. Boonop het studente gedink dat die gebruik van vertaling hul akademiese prestasie en begrip sou verbeter. Aan die ander kant mag die gebruik van beide tale (Engels en huistaal) uitdagings skep onder die studente en dosente omdat hulle nie almal dieselfde huistaal deel nie. Laastens het studente nie saamgestem dat die gebruik van die huistaal tesame met Engels sleg sou wees vir akademiese prestasie nie, maar eerder dat studente se uitkomsprestasie suksesvol sou wees wanneer 'n plaaslike taal as 'n taal van leer en onderrig gebruik word.

Die studie beveel dus aan dat die bestuur van Okakarara Beroepsopleidingsentrum 'n uitvoerbaarheidstudie doen omtrent die moontlikhede daarvan om *translanguaging* praktyke in klaskamers in te sluit. Die studie beveel ook aan dat die dosente se persepsies omtrent *translanguaging* geassesseer word en 'n gedetailleerde studie uitgevoer word om die uitdagings te verken wat betrokke is by die gebruik van meer as een taal in klaskamers by skool- en beroepsopleidingsvlak.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
ABSTRACT.....	ii
AFRIKAANSE OPSOMMING.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGENTS	vi
LIST OF ABBREVIATION AND/OR ACRONOMYS	x
LISTS OF TABLES.....	xii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY	1
1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	1
1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	3
1.4 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY.....	3
1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	3
1.6 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY.....	4
1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS.....	4
1.8 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY	4
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	6
2. INTRODUCTION.....	6
2.1 LANGUAGE POLICIES IN EDUCATION IN NAMIBIA.....	6
2.2 THE ROLE OF ENGLISH IN EDUCATION IN AFRICA	14
2.3 PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING.....	17
2.4 LANGUAGE IN HIGHER EDUCATION: PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE USE OF THE L1 (HOME LANGUAGE).....	23

2.5 ADVANTAGES OF USING ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES AT HIGHER EDUCATION AND TECHNIKON, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) LEVELS	26
2.6 DISADVANTAGES OF USING ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES AT HIGHER EDUCATION AND TVET LEVELS	28
2.7 CURRENT LANGUAGE PRACTICES IN NAMIBIAN CLASSROOMS (AT ALL LEVELS).....	29
2.8 TRANSLANGUAGING	30
2.9 CONCLUSION: THE POSSIBILITIES OF TRANSLANGUAGING AT TVET LEVEL.	35
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	37
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	37
3.2 STUDY AREA.....	37
3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN	37
3.4 POPULATION AND SAMPLE	38
3.5 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT AND DATA COLLECTION	40
3.6 DATA ANALYSIS	41
3.7 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY	41
3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	44
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS	45
4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	45
4.2 STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS	45
4.3 PRESENTATION OF DATA.....	47
4.3.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FROM FREQUENCY TABLES.....	47
4.3.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FROM CROSS TABULATIONS	56
4.3.3 FINDINGS FROM OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS	82

4.4 CONCLUSION	88
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	90
5.1 INTRODUCTION	90
5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	95
5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS	95
5.5 CONCLUSION	96
REFERENCES	98
APPENDICES	110

LIST OF ABBREVIATION AND/OR ACRONOMYS

COSDEC:	Community Skills Development Centre
COSDEF:	Community Skills Development Foundation
EAP:	English for Academic Purposes
ESL:	English Second Language
EVTC:	Eenhana Vocational Training Centre
IELTS:	International English Language Testing System
LoLT:	Language of Learning and Teaching
L1:	Home Language
L2:	Second Language
MBESC:	Ministry of Education Sports and Culture
MHEST:	Ministry of Higher Education Science and Technology
MoEC:	Ministry of Education and Culture
NIMT:	Namibia Institute of Mine and Technology
NIED:	Namibia Institute for Educational Development
NTA:	Namibia Training Authority
NGOs:	NonGovernment Organisations
OVTC:	Okakarara Vocational Training Centre
SA:	South Africa
SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TL:	Target Language
TVET:	Technikon Vocational Educational and Training
UN:	United Nations

UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisations
UNICEF:	United Nation International Children Education Fund
UNIN:	United Nations Institute for Namibians
VETCs:	Vocational Education Training Centers
VET:	Vocational Education Training
VTCs:	Vocational Training Centers
VTN:	Valombola Training Center of Namibia
VVTC:	Valombola Vocational Training Centre
WVTC:	Windhoek Vocational Training Centre
ZVTC:	Zambezi Vocational Training Centre

LISTS OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Actual sample size after data collection	40
Table 3.2: Reliability Statistics Per Construct	43
Table 4.1: Student (Sample) representativeness of the study population	46
Table 4.2: Crosstab of Course Name * 1. You are able to speak English fluently	57
Table 4.3: Chi-Square Tests for Course Name * 1. You are able to speak English fluently	58
Table 4.4: Crosstab of Course Name * 2. You are able to write fluently in English	59
Table 4.5: Chi-Square Tests for Course Name * 2. You are able to write fluently in English	60
Table 4.6: Crosstab of Course Name * 3. You are able to communicate fluently in English	61
Table 4.7: Chi-Square Tests: Course Name*3. You are able to communicate fluently in English	62
Table 4.8: Crosstab of Course Level * 3. You are able to communicate fluently in English	63
Table 4.9: Chi-Square Tests for Course Level *3. You are able to communicate fluently in English	63
Table 4.10: Crosstab of Course Name * 5. English helps you to communicate with your lecturer and other students during lessons	64
Table 4.11: Chi-Square Tests for Course Name * 5. English helps you to communicate with your lecturer and other students during lessons	65
Table 4.12: Crosstab of Course Level * 5. English helps you to communicate with your lecturer and other students during lessons	66
Table 4.13: Chi-Square Tests for Course Level * 5. English helps you to communicate with your lecturer and other students during lessons	66
Table 4.14: Crosstab of Gender * 8. You are not able to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English	67
Table 4.15: Chi-Square Tests for Gender * 8. You are not able to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English	68
Table 4.16: Crosstab of Course Name * 10. You see English as an obstacle to your academic performance	69
Table 4.17: Chi-Square Tests for Course Name * 10. You see English as an obstacle to your academic performance	70

Table 4.18: Crosstab of Course Name * 12. Using home languages in the classroom will make it easy to understand difficult English academic terms.....	71
Table 4.19: Chi-Square Tests for Course Name * 12. Using home languages in the classroom will make it easy to understand difficult English academic terms.....	72
Table 4.20: Crosstab of Gender * 16. Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.	72
Table 4.21: Chi-Square Tests for Gender * 16. Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.	73
Table 4.22: Crosstab of Course Name * 16. Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.	73
Table 4.23: Chi-Square Tests for Course Name * 16. Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.	74
Table 4.24: Crosstab of Lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding * Using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance	75
Table 4.25: Chi-Square Tests for Lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding * Using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance.....	76
Table 4.26: Crosstab of Lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding * Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.	77
Table 4.27: Chi-Square Tests for Lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding * Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.	78
Table 4.28: Crosstab of Using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance * 16. Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.	79
Table 4.29: Chi-Square Tests for Using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance * 16. Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.	80

Table 4.30: Crosstab of Home language * Q18. How often do you use your home language in the classroom during a lesson?	81
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Table 4.31: Chi-Square Tests for Home language * Q18. How often do you use your home language in the classroom during a lesson?	82
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

Academic programmes in Namibia, Africa as well as in other parts of the world are still grounded on a monolingual bias and insist on reinforcing traditional monolingual behaviour in the classroom (Portolés & Martí, 2017). As a result, the use of the students' home languages (L1) has been persistently avoided, even though in some instances it has proven to be beneficial to students and teachers (Portolés & Martí, 2017). In Namibia, English as the only Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) from Grade 4 upwards negatively affects the learners' academic performance especially in rural primary schools (Mwinda & van der Walt, 2015). However, this challenge is not exclusively unique to Namibia. Brock-Utne (2007) established that in other African countries such as Tanzania and South Africa, the students' insufficient competency in the LoLT (English) is the main factor contributing to academic under-achievement as well as low education standards. Hence, the study's argument that multilingualism and translanguaging can be a positive asset for both teaching and learning (Alby & Léglise, 2017:115). This can be done by adopting multilingual pedagogies which acknowledge the current language practices of students and transform monolingual education to bilingual programmes to improve students' performance (Alby & Léglise, 2017).

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

After 29 years of Namibian independence, the decision to use English as the national language still deeply affects levels of success in education. The problems in education that have been reported since independence still persist. In spite of heavy government investments, sixty-one percent of the learners struggle with English both as a subject and as a LoLT (Harris, 2011). According to Harris (2011: 57), 83% of the learners want to learn in their home language and 87% of the learners want to talk to teachers in their home language. In Namibia where there are no or little similarities of the structure of home language (L1) and English (L2), learners encounter numerous problems in L2 acquisition, thus there is a need for the consistent use of L1 to improve the learners' academic performance (Derakhshan & Karimi, 2015; Harris, 2011). Given this background, the Namibian

language policy in education recommended the use of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction from Grade 1 to 3 and that English be used from Grade 4 to 12. In addition, local languages are still taught as subjects from Grade 4 to 12 (Republic of Namibia [RN], 2002).

Namibia's vocational education system which consists of Okakarara Vocational Training Centre (OVTC) and other vocational institutions also requires the use of L2 as a LoLT. Discussions during lessons are conducted in English and other foreign languages such as Portuguese are taught as subjects in the hospitality trade at many vocational institutions. As a result of the use of L2 as a LoLT at the OVTC, it has been observed that some of the students struggle to attain proficiency in English, verbal and written communication, to obtain good results in their tests and examinations.

The current study posits that there is a need to support OVTC students in improving their academic performance by using both L1 and L2 (through translanguaging practices). This study seeks to investigate the affordances for using translanguaging to support training at OVTC to improve the students' academic performance. Vocational training graduates in most cases work in communities where English is not used extensively for communication, thus their mastery of home and community languages might help them cope with their studies and work after graduation. The use of L1 (home language) can be a helpful resource for Vocational Education Training (VET) students especially at the beginning level of their studies. This is important because most of the trainees are Grade 10 and 12 failures and some of them have poor results in English. Findings in a study conducted by Hibbert (2014:132) revealed that the use of L1 in education benefitted students whose mother tongue was not English. Thus, the use of L1 at OVTC in Namibia might improve the students' academic performance. As such, this study breaks new ground by examining the students' perceptions towards the use of home language from the perspective of translanguaging practices.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question of this study is: what are the affordances for translinguaging as a teaching and learning strategy in the OVTC? The study answered specific questions listed below:

- What do students view as the benefits of using English in their academic studies?
- What are students' perceived barriers to using English in their academic studies?
- What are the possible advantages and/or disadvantages of using other languages alongside English from the students' perspective?

By answering these questions, the purpose of the study as presented below might be accomplished.

1.4 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

This study seeks to determine the students' perceptions towards the use of home language from the perspectives of translinguaging practices at Okakarara Vocational Training Centre in order to establish the enabling spaces (affordances) available for translinguaging as a teaching and learning strategy in vocational education.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is highly relevant to different stakeholders involved in the Namibian education system. For instance, information generated from the study can be used by the management of OVTC and the Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Innovation to carry out the feasibility study on the possibility of translinguaging in Higher Education, particularly at TVET level. The language challenges faced by OVTC students, which negatively affect their performance can be eliminated by formulating appropriate learning and teaching intervention strategies which include translinguaging practices.

1.6 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study is limited only to Okakarara Vocational Training Centre among the six recognised vocational centres in Namibia.

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Translanguaging: The ability of multilingual speakers to shuffle between languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system (Hibbert & Van der Walt, 2014).

Bilingual: Means the use of more than one language.

Monolingual: The use of only one language.

Vocational Training: Is the type of education where training focuses more on technical skills like hands-on and craft in a specific trade for a particular job function.

1.8 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1: Introduction

This master thesis comprises five different chapters. The first chapter of the study spells out the rationale, delineates the orientation of the study, and spells out the statement of the problem and the research questions. The rationale will also give more details on the aim of the study. In addition, key terms used in the study are defined.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter gives an overview of the relevant literature to the study. The literature is significant to one's comprehension of the broad scope of the research questions. The published literature will be used to discuss the related phenomena under study and pay greater attention to the concept of translanguaging in vocational training.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

In this chapter, the methodology of the study is described. In addition, the chapter also describes the research design, the population and sampling procedures, the study's research instruments and how the data was collected. The chapter also explains the data analysis procedures with the use of the SPSS software.

Chapter 4: Results and Discussions of the findings

This chapter discusses and analyses the findings of the research that were drawn from the questionnaires. The results will be discussed in detail and will be presented in graphs and tables.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

Chapter 5 gives the limitation of the study, the research conclusion and the recommendations of the study based on the findings. Finally, suggestions for further research are given.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will explore language policies and acts in education in Namibia. The background to Vocation Education and Training Centres in Namibia will be explored and problems and challenges in higher education and Vocational Education and Training (VET) will be highlighted. This chapter will further reveal the role of English in education in Namibia. The perceptions about the use of the L1 (Home-language) at higher education level will also be discussed. This chapter will examine the advantages and disadvantages of using English for Academic Purposes (EAP) at higher education, Technikon Vocational Education and Training (TVET) levels. Current language practices in Namibian classrooms (at all levels) and Translanguaging in the classroom will also be examined to draw conclusions on the possibilities of translanguaging at TVET level.

2.1 LANGUAGE POLICIES IN EDUCATION IN NAMIBIA

The concept of a new language policy for Namibia was drawn up in anticipation of a new nation in the 1980s; this was done in Lusaka at the United Nations Institute for Namibians (UNIN) which was set by the United Nations (UN) to prepare Namibians for independence (Ndjoze-Ojo, 2013). A decision was made to adopt English as an official language in Namibia since English was perceived as a politically neutral language. According to Ndjoze-Ojo (2013:148), adopting English would make it possible to “tackle complex and potentially divisive linguo-cultural, tribal issues in a multilingual Namibia, and to replace linguistic fragmentation with greater coherence”. Given this background, it is evident that English was chosen to be Namibia’s official language to unite all language groups or tribes in Namibia. This meant that no indigenous language or tribe could be more superior than the other. On the contrary, Chavez (2016) argues that English as a Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) in schools was selected by Namibia after the country gained independence in order to overcome the influence of the Afrikaans language which had been introduced by the oppressive apartheid Afrikaner government of South Africa.

The formalities of the decision regarding English as the official language in Namibia were acknowledged after independence in 1990 when it was documented in the supreme law of land that is found in the Namibian Constitution (Republic of Namibia [RN], 1990). As such, Article 3 (1) of the Namibian Constitution states that the official language of Namibia shall be English (GRN, 1990:6). Article 3 (2) further states that nothing contained in the constitution shall prohibit the use of any other language as a LoLT in “private schools or in schools financed or subsidised by the state subject to compliance with such requirements as may be imposed by law, to ensure proficiency in the official language, or for pedagogic reasons” (RN, 1990:6). In addition, Article 3 (3) of the constitution of Namibia states that nothing contained in Sub-Article 1 hereof shall preclude legislation by parliament which permits the use of a language other than English for legislative administrative and judicial purposes in regions or areas where other languages or languages spoken by a substantial component of the population dominate.

In view of the above changes, fundamental principles were noted during the development of the Namibian education system. For instance, based on a study by Ndjoze-Ojo (2013:150), the Namibian Constitution was the background of the design and implementation of the language policy for schools in Namibia and one of the crucial points outlined in this policy/constitution is: Education for All. As a result, the Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC) organised a conference on the implementation of the language policy for schools from 22-26 of June 1992 (Ndjoze-Ojo, 2013).

The conference proceedings resulted in the 1993 Longman Namibia Publication, The Namibia National Conference on the Implementation of the language policy for schools from which an extract publication language policy for schools 1992-1996 was developed. This policy outlined the proposed use of the indigenous national languages and dialects in schools from Grade 1-3 with English taught as a subject. Grade 4 was planned as a transitional year with selected subjects taught in English as the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) from Grade 4-12 while the indigenous languages (L1) were still taught as subjects (Ndjoze-Ojo, 2013). This change underpins the role of L1 at the highest level (national constitution) as a key player in the Namibian education system. According to Chavez (2016), the use of the indigenous national languages as LoLTs from

Grade 1 to 3 was probably adopted for the purpose of developing the learners' skills that were essential to their educational success at a later stage.

With regards to basic education, the Namibia Education Act of 2001 was promulgated in December 2001 with the following objectives:

1. to "provide for an accessible, equitable, qualitative and democratic national education service" (Ministry of Basic Education, Sports and Culture [MBESC], 2004:3).
2. to "provide for the establishment of the National Advisory Council on Education, the National Examination, Assessment and Certification Board, Regional Education Forums, School Boards and the Education Development Fund" (MBESC, 2004:3).
3. to "promote the establishment of the code of conduct for teaching profession, establishment of teaching service committee and physical establishment of state and private schools and hostels" (MBESC, 2004:3).

The objectives of the Namibia Education Act of 2001 clearly define the parameters under which education services will be provided in Namibia, where equitable access to education will be promoted. Moreover, the Namibia education system will be monitored by established bodies such as the National Advisory Council on Education.

Thus, the above arguments seem to intimate that English as an official language in Namibia was a result of a political decision at independence, and not the dominance of the use of English language before independence. At independence, Namibia chose English as its official national language although it had no history of English as a colonial language and few citizens spoke English as their first language (Harris, 2011). In addition, Harris (2011:11) points out that the decision has been well supported and there is an expectation among Namibians that learning English as early as possible is important because it will open many doors in the future in terms of access to high education, globally. Furthermore, shortly after independence in 1990, Namibia adopted a new

language policy for schools in order to promote the mother tongue use alongside English, in schools and colleges of education (MBESC, 2003).

In 1992, a language policy for Namibian schools was implemented and its goals included the promotion of a learner's own language and cultural identity through the use of L1 (home language or mother tongue) instruction, at least at the lower primary level (Banda, Mostert & Wikan. 2012). Moreover, the language policy promoted proficiency in English, the official language by the end of the seven-year primary cycle, and English was to be a LoLT beyond the lower primary level. According to MBESC (2003:2), the implementation of the 1992 language policy was not standardised in all regions of Namibia because the policy implementers interpreted it differently. For instance, in some regions, teachers mainly preferred teaching in English rather than in their mother tongue as they viewed teaching in L1 as not compulsory. Additionally, formerly disadvantaged learners were further marginalised in this process, as non-English speaking teachers were expected to teach through the medium of English. According to the United Nations International Children Education Fund (UNICEF) (2016), efforts by the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) to allow mother tongue as a LoLT beyond Grade 4 failed during the drafting of the National Curriculum for Basic Education in 2008. As a result, the English proficiency of students leaving the formal education in either Grade 10 or 12 is currently low. The contention is that the majority of these students enter VET, and this means English might be a barrier to them in their learning process since they use English only in all their modules as a LoLT.

2.1.1 Vocational Education and Training Centres (VETCs) in Namibia

In Namibia, basic education and vocational training have been in existence even before Namibia attained its independence in 1990. During the German colonial era, education in South West Africa (Namibia) was conducted by missionaries (Rheinish and Finnish missionaries) from 1884 -1915 (Shibata, 2005). The German education system promoted Christianity and the German language for Namibians to know how to read the bible that was written in German (Grossmann & Naanda, 2006). This indicates that the Namibia education system started with language courses geared to

Christianise Namibia, then proceeded to include a formal system involving academic natural and social science subjects like mathematics and history.

According to Shibata (2005:7), the German government started getting involved in the Namibian education system in 1894; the first governmental school was established in Windhoek for whites only with one class of about 11 learners. In addition, the teacher who taught at this school was one licenced teacher from Germany named Helene Nitze. The subject syllabus for this school was designed in accordance with the German education system (Shibata, 2005). The number of schools started increasing in 1899. New schools were introduced in towns like Grootfontein, Karibib, Keetmashoop, Swakopmund, and thereafter in other parts of the country. In addition, compulsory education began in 1906, and introduced a different education system based on race, with separate schools for whites and blacks. African education was still based on Christianity (Shibata, 2005). This unequal access to education which was evident before independence led to the introduction in the Namibian constitution of equal access to quality education for all Namibians regardless of race, thus, abolishing racial divisions.

Besides missionary education, vocational training was also offered. For instance, indigenous people were taught how to produce food from gardening, how to do carpentry, needlework and domestic science (Grosman & Naanda, 2006; Shibata, 2005). The main aim behind vocational training was to equip poor Namibian youths with skills which they could use as domestic servants and labourers on the whites' farms and settlements. Namibia was the second largest German colony and in 1911, its education system consisted of only 48 primary schools, 1 secondary school, 5 vocational schools and 30 schools with Finnish language as a LoLT (Shabita, 2005). This indicates that there were very few secondary schools to supply the VET sector with good students having secondary education; this might have led to a high number of people with primary education only being admitted to vocational schools.

The post-independent history of vocational education in Namibia dates back to 1994 when the Namibian government introduced the Vocational Training Act to regulate its Vocational Education

and Training (VET) system (Grossmann & Naanda, 2006). This Act was replaced by the VET Act 1 of 2008 which resulted in the establishment of the Namibia Training Authority (NTA) which is responsible for regulating and providing VET in Namibia (Namibia Training Authority [NTA], 2017). All these changes and efforts in the VET Act indicate that Namibia's VET sector is continuously shaped and developed by Namibia's highest decision-making body, the Parliament. Furthermore, it means the VET sector is a very important part of the Namibian education system as it also receives separate government funding through the NTA.

Vocational skills are very important for economic growth and for accelerating poverty reduction in Namibia, but problems can limit this growth especially when people are trained in 'wrong' skills (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation [UNESCO], 2016). 'Wrong' skills can be understood in terms of training people in skills that are not identified as national priorities; therefore, the government, in conversation with the appropriate stakeholders should identify the appropriate vocational skills required in order to increase the productivity of the Namibian nation (NTA, 2018). After the Namibia National Vocational Training Act of 1994, in 1995 the Ministry of Higher Education introduced a new Vocational Training, Science and Technology Act to stimulate vocational training as a vehicle for socio-economic development and its motto was to "invest in people and provide hope and faith in the future" (Ministry of Higher Education Science and Technology [MHEST], 1995). Notably, the NTA was tasked with identifying and funding vocational programmes which were a national priority to support the social-economic development of Namibia.

Similar to other countries like Namibia, the vocational educators work towards enhancing the quality of Vocational Education. For example, since 2012 the German Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development (BMZ) has and still continues to help with the promotion of vocational education and training in Namibia (WVTC, 2012). In addition, researchers from UNESCO (2016:12) argues that, even though there are projects promoting vocational training, Namibia still faces an exorbitant number of people living in poverty especially those without formal education and people who reside in rural areas, of which young people and

women are heavily affected. Another challenge in Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Namibia is the lack of qualified experts, inadequate cooperation between companies, Vocational Education, and Training (VET) institutions that hamper the development of occupational profile, training standards and teaching materials to meet the needs of the economy (UNESCO, 2016). This indicates that the NTA as a regulatory of VET training should work closely with the industry to come up with strategies to meet the needs of the labour market. The NTA in collaboration with the industry needs to set standards which VET graduates require to positively contribute to the labour market and the national economy.

It is also noted that Germany played a vital role in developing the Namibian education system before and after independence. Their legacy still prevails at the establishment of the Vocational Training Centre of Namibia (VTCN), which is currently known as the Windhoek Vocational Training Centre (WVTC). In addition, the Namibian government and German government signed a bilateral agreement for training exchange programmes for experts in vocational technical fields (Windhoek Vocational Training Centre [WVTC], 2017). Technical fields where experts were needed included electrical general and auto-mechanics and the exchange program aimed at improving the quality of vocational training in Namibia as the country prepared to be industrialised by 2030.

As of 2017, there are seven recognised government owned and managed Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) in Namibia, excluding the private VTCs such as the Namibia Institute of Mine Technology (NIMT). The seven government VTCs are: Windhoek Vocational Training Centre (WVTC) in Khomas Region, Valombola Vocational Training Centre (VVTC) in Oshana region, Okakarara Vocational training Centre (OVTC) in the Otjozondjupa region, Rundu Vocational Centre (RVTC) in the Kavango West region, Eenhana Vocational Training Centre (EVTC) in the Ohangwena region, Nakayale Vocational Training Centre (NVTC) in the Omusati region and Zambezi Vocational Training Centre (ZVTC) in the Zambezi region. These VTCs are under the control of Namibia Training Authority (NTA) which is responsible for regulating and providing VET in Namibia as per the VET Act 1 of 2008 (Namibia Training Authority [NTA], 2017). The NTA further funds national priority vocational programmes at the seven government VTCs.

According to the NTA (2008), based on the Hospitality Curriculum of 2008, VTCs were advised to prioritise the use of either one of the Asian or European Languages. VTCs could also select their preferred languages based on social and political reasons and on how the foreign language would help in the socio-economic growth of the local community. Currently, foreign languages are used in all Namibian government owned VTCs offering hospitality trades or courses. Of the 7 government VTCs, 5 VTCs in the northern part of Namibia use Portuguese which is one of the most useful languages used in the tourism sector, since most of their visitors are from Angola. Moreover, OVTC uses German language in its hospitality trade. This highlights that VET hospitality students are not only challenged with the use of English as a LoLT but they are required to learn other European languages such as German and Portuguese.

For instance, the range of priority areas is evident in the different VTCs. It is noted that since 2017, the OVTC has 750 students and offers 10 trades namely Hospitality, Office Administration, Hairdressing, Plumbing and Pipefitting, Auto Mechanics, Cloth Production, Bricklaying and Plastering, Electrical General, Welding and Fabrication and Carpentry (Okakarara Vocational Training Centre [OVTC], 2017). A Namibian VTC with commercial VET activities in tourism and hospitality is Valombola Vocational Training Centre (VVTC) as of 2017; VVTC runs one income-generating project known as the Oshakati Guest House and has more than 800 trainees enrolled in 12 different trades (VVTC, 2017). The Windhoek Vocational Training Centre (WVTC) has a total of 15 trades with more than 410 trainees (WVTC, 2017). WVTC has different trades such as Boiler Making, Metal and Fabrication, Electrical General, Air Conditioning and Refrigerator, Plumbing and Pipe Fitting and Radio and Television installation trades, Auto Mechanics, Joinery and Cabinet Makers, Junior Computer technician and Microsoft Office Specialist courses including the International Computer Drivers Licence (ICDL) course (WVTC, 2017). Rundu Vocational Training Centre (RVTC) as of 2017 offers 9 different vocational trades, 3 from civil trades, 1 from the Electrical Trade, 2 from Office Administration and 3 from the Automotive Trade (Rundu Vocational Training Centre [RVTC], 2017). The Zambezi Vocational Training Centre (ZVTC) has 7 occupational trades which include Clothing technology, Joinery and Cabinet Making as well as Secretarial and Office Administration (Zambezi Vocational Training Centre [ZVTC], 2017).

VTCs in Namibia were established based on the local economic situations. For instance, tourism trades are offered in regions such as the Zambezi region where tourism activities are dominant. In VTCs in the southern and coastal areas of Namibia where mining, welding and fabrication are dominant economic activities, trades such as Metal Fabrication and Welding are common. The office administration trade is the most common occupation offered across many VTCs in Namibia; this might be due to the need for office administrators in all areas of Namibia regardless of economic activities taking place in each respective area or region.

In the southern part of Namibia, a Community Skills Development Centre (COSDEC) also offering vocational education was opened in 1999, which brought the total number of COSDECs to 10 in Namibia. COSDECs were established to offer vocational skills to Namibians using funds from the Namibian government and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). COSDECs target the unemployed youth in the country and mostly marginalised populations like women and low skilled adults from different communities. The aim is to improve and increase the earning capacity of disadvantaged Namibians by developing their entrepreneurial and essential skills to enhance their participation in small enterprises (Community Skills Development Foundation [COSDEF], 2017). COSDECs are partly funded by the Namibia government through the NTA and their vocational programmes are also aligned to national priority areas as determined by the NTA.

The English language has been and is still the LoLT at all Namibian VTCs and COSDECs and plays an important role when it comes to students accessing knowledge. OVTC is not an exception as English is the only language approved to be used during lessons. Foreign languages are only used during tourism lessons when students are learning foreign languages like German. As a result, the English language is seen as a facilitator for teaching and learning. Thus, the next section will look at the role of English in education in Africa and Namibia.

2.2 THE ROLE OF ENGLISH IN EDUCATION IN AFRICA

According to the British Council (2013:23-24) in Spain, it was discussed that English language in the education system has been used at all levels (early, primary, secondary, tertiary and adult education) as a LoLT. In addition, the use of English in higher education has been a benefit to all

students who intended to travel abroad and students from foreign-language backgrounds who might migrate to Europe and Asia. According to Bolton and Botha (2017:133), Singapore has six tertiary institutions and all of them maintain a uniform policy of using English as the sole LoLT. This is the situation in Namibia as well. However, despite the official Namibian policy of English as a LoLT throughout education, students use their home languages outside the classroom. This is common all over the world, where “a complex multilingual world of university students is usually characterised by code-switching from more formal registers of English in the classroom to the use of home languages in the corridors and cafeterias of universities” (Bolton & Botha, 2017:133). This indicates that L1 still forms part of the higher education system in an informal setting as students use L1 among themselves outside the classrooms.

Furthermore, Knagg (2013:23) argues that in many countries in which education systems at all levels (early years, primary, secondary, tertiary, adult) use English as a LoLT to teach and learn other subjects such as mathematics, science and history, the majority of learners (and teachers) are not first-language English speakers. In the same vein, English is used as a LoLT in many African countries, from primary school up to the tertiary level (Brady, Tefera & Plonsik, 2013). In the former French colonies of Ivory Coast, Mali and Senegal, English is the first compulsory foreign language taught. According to Brady et al. (2013:8), courses at tertiary institutions in many African countries have been taught in English for some time. Similarly, AL-Khalil (2015) established that English has become a medium of instruction at universities in many countries and is a basic means of second language learning and teaching. English is also a medium for accessing sources of modern knowledge and scientific research, and a means of global communication (AL-Khalil, 2015).

The above shows that there is a high demand for the English language in African and other continents. This is because the English language enables many people to have access to global employment and education opportunities. Concurring, Brady et al. (2013) established that there is a growing demand for English-language usage across Africa and English is seen as an important

tool to access global development opportunities. Additionally, the importance of primary education completion has resulted in an increase in the number of learners in schools where in most cases the LoLT is English. As such, an increase in the demand for English teaching resources and learning (Brady et al., 2013) is anticipated. This demand for English-language usage across Africa will continue into the foreseeable future because English language is widely recognised as a “lingua franca” or a “world language” (Shamim, 2017). According to Brady et al. (2013:23), there will be an increase in the number of Africans seeking strong English language competence in order to obtain work and attend university or vocational education. Moreover, proficiency in the English language is seen as an advantage when it comes to access to higher and vocational education.

Brady et al. (2013:3-5), state that 26 African countries use English as their official language. This number includes countries that were not colonised by British countries such as Rwanda, Gabon and Burundi. In many parts of the world including Africa, English has become a favourite second language and people who are fluent in English are perceived to be highly educated. According to Nie and Zhao (2015), English is a global language used commonly during business negotiations. This means that English has become a pre-requisite for conducting businesses at the global stage. Further, Brady et al. (2013:4), state that access to knowledge is the business of education. This is significant as it implies that English plays a vital role in Education, hence, in Namibia, English was chosen as the official language in schools and universities.

Even though English is the official LoLT in Namibian schools, it must be noted that there is still a high usage of mother tongue in the schools located in areas dominated by certain language groups. In those areas, the first language is usually the mother tongue which becomes the primary language for communication between students or even staff who are originally from such areas. English language is only used during lessons of other subjects including Physical Science, Mathematics, Geography etc., and not during the first language lessons. This is supported by Cantoni (2007), who observed that in Namibia most schools are dominated by specific members of a language or ethnic group. For instance, schools in the Northern Namibian regions have the

majority of Oshiwambo-speaking teachers and students. In such circumstances where the majority is from the same ethnic group, the mother tongue is used for communication purposes and English is used or enforced during other lessons such as Biology where the LoLT is English. Additionally, Cantoni (2007:25) notes that the history of Namibian education has always consisted of diverse languages and Namibians have had to go through school using a LoLT that was not their native language. Significantly, since 1990 this LoLT has been English, a language which was not familiar to the population but enforced at all levels of education.

In Namibia, education is one of the key areas in VET, which means, education is seen as a long duration exercise with broader implications for knowledge as well as skills. Moreover, education is needed in VET so that any form of training, for example, Auto Mechanics, broadens the level of understanding through reading and information skills to enable students to cope with technology (Blyth & Cave, 2008). Thus, English language is the LoLT in all vocational courses except for foreign language courses such as German.

2.3 PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2.3.1 A global perspective

Maclean (2010:16), stipulates that there is a need for a change in the nature of societies which relate to global economic competition, and there is a need for graduates to positively contribute to the development of their national economies. Maclean (2010:16) argues that vocational qualifications in most cases do not provide access to university education. Hence, it is important to include occupational domains and pedagogical qualifications in university education targeting vocation education teachers. In light of this, vocational education significantly differs from university education. However, in Namibia, this is not the case as a vocational qualification is any qualification from National Qualification Framework (NQF) level 1 to level 4. For instance, a

VET graduate in office management with an NQF level 4 certificate can be admitted in a university to study for a higher certificate in Business Management at NQF level 5. According to Marsh, Ontero and Shikongo (2002:11), the effectiveness of learning and teaching is limited by the fact that teachers and students use a second language (L2) in areas in which exposure to the language in the community is low. Marsh et al. (2002:11) also claim that it is difficult in the best-resourced contexts for teachers and students to teach and learn in a language in which they are not proficient.

Analysing VET enrolment globally, Zawieja-Żurowska and Zimny (2014:275), revealed that the number of vocational students in Poland increased by nearly 1.5 million and a mounting (by more than 40%) enrolment ratio within 20 years, was considered a huge success of Polish transformation. However, success in enrolment terms was accompanied by a dramatic fall in the quality of education. Furthermore, Zawieja-Żurowska and Zimny (2014:276) note that:

There is a growing gap between knowledge and skills of graduates entering the labour market and employers' expectations as in most cases vocational graduates are not prepared to work due to lack of the following skills: ability to think critically, analytically or economically and look for cause-effect relations, formulate messages and communicate, find and sort out information, make independent judgments, use foreign languages, work in teams and manage these teams, organise and carry out projects, learn continuously and share knowledge with others, conduct negotiations.

In addition, Maclean (2010:16) argues that, a distinction should be considered between short and medium-term orientation in qualification demands that are met through vocational training, and long-term educational profiles for university qualifications. Thus, according to Maclean (2010:18), the goal of tertiary education must be sustainable and provide long-term usable professional education.

The VET sector world-wide still has other problems which negatively impact the quality of VET graduates. These include the context in which students are taught and the way in which the

assessment system is structured. For instance, a study conducted by Alpysbay, Adieva, Zhamuldinov, Komarov and Karimova (2020:1), revealed that the quality assessment system currently existing in the technical and vocational education system in Kazakhstan is far from perfection. This is because vocational examinations are not standardised across vocational schools and are not related closely to the qualification requirements applied to the graduates by the actual economic sector (Alpysbay et al., 2016:8). Similarly, Muñoz and Araya (2017:) state that the VET education system is faced with challenges on how to re-orientate student assessment systems to deliver the tools and skills required by the students so they can perform positively in society. Alpysbay et al. (2016:8) argue that vocational examinations are conducted by the teachers who taught the subject and there is no standardised methodology for assessments leading to all students passing state vocational examinations. Using the same line of thought Lalancette, Roseveare and Tremblay (2012:1) underscore the need to complement institution-based assessments by providing a direct evaluation of student learning outcomes at the global level and to enable institutions to benchmark the performance of their students against their peers as part of their improvement efforts. In Namibia, VET examinations are regulated and administrated by the NTA across all registered private and public VTCs and examinations are not set by the trade trainers themselves.

The VET sector is unattractive to many people who complete secondary education; this is because of the low enrolment rates experienced in many countries. For example, there is a lack of participation in technical and vocational streams in Malaysia, thus there is a low opportunity for Technikon Vocational Education and Training (TVET) providers to attract school-leavers to take up TVET (Ismail & Hassan, 2013). This could be attributed to the fact that vocational education and training is often seen as the only solution to the youth joblessness problem in many countries (Eichhorst, Rodríguez-Planas, Schmidl & Zimmermann, 2015). As a result, vocational education and training is a major policy topic for countries all over the world, who are eager to learn from the best examples where participation in VET is high and youth unemployment is low (Bolli, Bürgi, Katherine, Egg, Kemper, Rageth & RenoldBoll, 2018). TVET seems to be the last resort for less qualified students for academic option. This perception has been aggravated by the lower academic requirements stipulated for admission into TVET programmes and the limited prospects for further educational and professional development of TVET graduates (Ismail & Hassan, 2013).

Hence, there has been a reduction in the number of people applying for TVET programmes as students who pass their Grade 12 are likely not to enroll for vocational education. The societal stigma of TVET in Namibia has also been created by the impression that the primary objective of vocational education and training is to cater for school dropouts, rather than as an important strategy to train skilled workers for the employment market and for sustainable livelihoods. Explaining the high VET enrolment in Namibia, Katjavivi (2006:15), notes that this could be due to the high Grade 10 and 12 dropouts who turn to VET programmes as a last resort because they fail to meet university entry admission requirements.

2.3.2 An African perspective

The global TVET problems are also seen in Africa. For instance, TVET programmes in Nigeria are still fraught with challenges which include inadequate funding of VET leading to inadequate and poor VET facilities (Arimonu & Okoye, 2013). For example, most technical education departments in Nigerian universities do not have laboratories or workshop space. Furthermore, there is a brain drain in Nigeria with technical teachers and lecturers of technical education moving in search of better conditions of service. Because of the brain drain, Arimonu and Okoye (2013:114) claim that there is lack of staff Training and Retention to improve the quality of vocational graduate. Similarly, Odhiambo (2013) established that Kenya is faced with the same problem where the country is experiencing a brain drain as many highly educated people are leaving to work in developed countries. Namibia has a similar challenge; when VET trainers obtain higher academic qualifications, they opt to become lecturers at universities.

In many African countries, vocational education and training is still not fully advanced, and this is caused by a variety of reasons such as the political economy and financial resources (Eichhorst 2012 et al; Papier, 2017). Financial resources seem to be insufficient to meet the growing demand of enrolment in TVET. In other African countries like Ghana, VET is also considered lowly as young people think there are better courses to do than vocational education; they think of being lawyers for example, and such decisions have nothing to do with VET (Oketch, 2014). Papier (2017:42) carried out a study in five African countries; South Africa, Ghana, Cameroon, Egypt

and Tanzania, and discovered that these countries experience financial problems as VET funds are inadequate and are usually less than 5% of the national budget. This has led to most of the VET regulators to adopt/charge levies on employers for VET graduates to contribute towards the cost of producing new VET graduates (Papier, 2017). Moreover, with a growing demand in VET from potential students, a problem of not having enough facilitators/trainers is likely to prevail. Unlike other African countries, Namibia has established the VET levy imposed on all VET graduate employers to assist in funding vocational education.

Another common challenge in Africa identified by Yamanda (2001;87-90) is the mismatch of the education policy and labour market, which leads to students being trained in small and micro-scale enterprises. The ultimate result is that the graduates do not get employed on time. The VET in Africa has been described as of low quality (Eichhorst et al., 2012; Akoojee, Gewer & McGrath, 2005). It must be noted that the VET situation is not the same in all African countries, for instance, in Zimbabwe parents, teachers and the public have taken TVET seriously and understood its socio-economic impact on their country. The entry requirements for TVET are quite high to produce high quality graduates (Akanbi, 2017:9-10). Thus, quality VET graduates need entrepreneur skills in order to be able to create businesses and contribute to national economies since the labour market is not likely to give employment to all graduates. In Namibia and Zimbabwe, this is evidenced by the number of VET graduates selling VET products in the streets in Windhoek, while Namibian metal fabrication graduates have established small metal fabrication businesses.

According to Amedorme and Fiagbe (2013:253-254), Ghana has also realised the importance of providing quality TVET to enhance the development of the country. However, the country has challenges that hamper its TVET objectives. These challenges include not having enough technical institutes and inadequate training equipment which have compromised the standard or quality of TVET training. Furthermore, Amedorme and Fiagbe (2013:253-254) revealed that the number of trainers is inadequate to cater for enrolled TVET trainees. In addition, there is a mismatch of acquired skills by trainees and the needs of the labour market. Negative attitudes and perceptions regarding TVET are also additional challenges identified by Amedorme and Fiagbe (2013:253-254). In Ghana, Dasmani (2011) observed that TVET needs more funds for training to improve

the quality of TVET programmes which in turn could lead to a decline in the level of unemployment among the TVET graduates.

In South Africa (SA), there was a high demand of TVET because of the mining sector, development of railways, harbours and engineering work. However, financial constraints were a major problem (City & Guilds Group, 2015). For instance, SA's VET department gets insufficient funds yet it buys expensive equipment and conducts expensive training programmes (City & Guilds Group, 2015:6). Another challenge is the involvement of the VET industry in helping to align current TVET curriculums with industry needs. This has led to the VET sector not achieving industry needs (City & Guilds Group, 2015:9). In addition, the South African VET status and career path is still problematic as the VET system is complex with almost 20 separate authorities responsible for training in different sectors (City & Guilds Group, 2015:6). In addition, UNESCO (2014:13) states that there is a lack of diversity and quality in the TVET sector. Universities do not have laboratories or workshop space. Added to this is the brain drain of technical teachers and lecturers of technical education who have moved to better conditions of service offered elsewhere. Arimonu and Okoye (2013:114) argue that technical educators in Nigeria have the greatest challenge of convincing the law makers as to why they should give priority attention to the VET programme during resources allocation. The introduction of new VET government policies prioritising VET education in Nigeria could assist to prevent brain drain taking place in countries like South Africa.

2.3.3 A Namibian perspective

According to Ndjoze-Ojo (2013:151), despite adopting English as an official language in Namibia, certain challenges prevailed. One of the challenges was the minimum number of only 2% of the Namibian population who spoke English as their mother tongue before the implementation of the Namibian language policy. Furthermore, there was a lack of familiarity of the English language amongst the vast majority of Namibians, and teachers were not trained to teach English. Conversely, they were trained using the Afrikaans medium and expected to teach in English in adherence to the new language policy for schools. The language challenges experienced were not

only limited to the Namibian schools but included the VET sector. Researchers from UNESCO (2016:55) concluded that Namibia's basic education did not provide a strong foundation for learning in VET or in higher education. Additionally, the pass rate at Grade 12 and Grade 10 was low due to challenges linked to using English as the LoLT. According to researchers from UNESCO (2016:55), many of the learners who failed Grades 10 and 12 had insufficient knowledge, skills and competencies, hence they could not get entry into universities in Namibia or abroad. Katjavivi (2006:15) conducted a situational analysis in Namibia and discovered that vocational education is not considered seriously as it is understood to be for school dropouts.

According to researchers from UNESCO (2016:57), the provision of a competent-based VET in Namibia is hindered by the lack of funds to meet the demands because competent-based VET is provided by limited and expensive NTA approved institutions. VET has the capacity to accommodate only a fraction of those who complete their basic education, and hence, excludes those who fail. Furthermore, the high drop-out rates and the poor quality of the training reduce the supply of skilled workers. The irrelevance of VET to the needs of the trainees and employers contributes to the dysfunction of Namibia's labour market (UNESCO, 2016:57). Based on the previous statement, it can be concluded that the VET education system in Namibia fails to address the demands of the labour market in terms of producing adequate skilled workforce. Similarly, Grossmann and Naanda (2006:5) note that Namibia's VET system still experiences many weaknesses which include the high drop-out rates, low student intake and outputs of graduates, high failure rates in national trade tests, as well as high unit costs and inefficient management of the VET system.

2.4 LANGUAGE IN HIGHER EDUCATION: PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE USE OF THE L1 (HOME LANGUAGE)

According to Ankrah (2015:3), in most African countries the indigenous languages have been shadowed by the English language. Even in the post independent phase, many African countries still use their colonisers' languages in their official transactions and deliberations, as well as the

LoLT in their schools. Globally, there have been efforts to introduce L1 as an official language in schools up to university level. This is one of the academic challenges faced by students when English is used as a LoLT. In addition, students need to master English fully for them to be successful in other subjects like mathematics which are offered in English (Ankrah, 2015).

A good example of a feasibility study aimed at replacing English as the university's official language was completed at Pakistan universities where language remains an issue even at First Degree level (Din, 2015). Lecturers expect students at university level not to have language related deficiencies. However, according to Din (2015: 139), lecturers' expectations of the students in terms of their proficiency in English language were not being met. Thus, different governments have formed committees to make the necessary arrangements to replace English with Urdu since Urdu is a national language of Pakistan. In addition, Urdu is considered as the representative of Pakistani culture. This indicates that there might be a need in Namibia to conduct a similar study, but such studies need to focus on the VET level as most students struggle with English after having failed it at school level.

Feasibility studies conducted by Din (2015:138-144) and Harris (2011:15) provide evidence for using L1 (home language) as a LoLT where students are willing to learn in their home language. Debreli and Oyman (2015:153-158) also established that most of the students at Science/Anatolian/Colleges, State High School and Vocational High School preferred L1 to be used in their English classrooms. Significantly, the demand for L1 use is increasing, thus there is a need to review the existing English-only as LoLT policies to accommodate the students' needs. According to Cummins (2007:231), the use of L1 enables students to engage in collaborative and constructive dialogues. The students' vocabulary is also improved because using another language alongside English enables students to make use of a bilingual dictionary in their learning process. During these practices students who have problems in expressing themselves in the L2 will be accommodated and they will actively participate in the classroom by creating joint projects where students can help to edit each other's work (Cummins, 2007). Additionally, when students work

together on joint projects, they can practise what is called sister class exchange to create literature and art and explore issues of social relevance to them and their communities.

Supporting the above view is Klapwijk and Van der Walt's (2016:79) observation based on South African students. They claim that "South African students, as multilinguals, bring awareness of their own multilingual potential for social and economic capital to the classroom; an awareness that enhances the desire to include their languages in education and ultimately increase their linguistic capital" (Klapwijk & Van der Walt, 2016). This is supported by Van der Walt and Steyn (2002:8) who reveal that most of the students at Stellenbosch University in South Africa prefer to be taught either in English or Afrikaans. However, this does not mean everyone is in favour of what is mentioned above; some students support the use of both English and Afrikaans at the same time. For instance, the Soweto Uprising of 1976 was caused by the South African government policy requiring the increased use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in secondary schools (UNICEF, 2016). Nevertheless, Van der Walt and Steyn (2002:4-7) established that multilingual education has been identified as one of the best ways of teaching and learning in helping to understand difficult subject knowledge. The two scholars argue that multilingual students are able to make meaning of their bilingual worlds (Van der Walt & Steyn, 2002:4-7). Also, it has been shown that translanguaging is a very important tool for multilingual learners to emphasise the fact that the mother tongue is an essential tool for achieving effective learning in English (Baker, Jones & Lewis, 2012; Kampittayakul, 2017).

After adopting English as an official language at independence, Namibia, like other African countries regarded English as a 'neutral' language. This means that students use English when they are among students who do not know how to speak the L1 fluently. Furthermore, because English is the simplest language it can be the best solution for basic communication in a situation like this and it can prevent conflicts. Hence, to avoid misunderstanding because of poor proficiency in L1 by all students during lessons, English is the best choice. Bysouth & Ikeda (2013).

2.5 ADVANTAGES OF USING ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES AT HIGHER EDUCATION AND TECHNIKON, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) LEVELS

Universities offering programmes with English as the only LoLT are likely to accomplish the integration of students from different cultural backgrounds (Kinnear, 2016). Furthermore, students can also become comfortable during lessons as only one language is used for communication. Similarly, Normark (2013:1) uncovered that English is an important part of the university culture and an access to a global society. Such an observation indicates that students who learn in English are likely to have more study and work opportunities in many English-speaking countries.

In addition, when studying English as a second language, students benefit in terms of academic progress in other subjects (NEA Research, 2007). According to the NEA Research, time spent on foreign language study reinforces the core subject areas of reading, language literacy, social studies and mathematics. Students' scores are likely to be significantly higher in mathematics and language arts after one semester of foreign language study (NEA Research, 2007). This is in line with findings by Ibrahim, Aljadhey, Hassali, Haq, and Khan (2014:1) who discovered that mastering English language boosts the students' understanding of academic materials leading to better academic performance.

To pursue this line of thought, some scholars argue that there is a strong correlation between English Language proficiency and students' academic performance in science and medical courses (Kola & Sunday, 2013; Kaliyadan, Thalamkandathil, Parupalli, Amin, Balaha & Ali, 2015; Hwang, Martirosyan & Wanjohi, 2015). This means that English language proficiency leads to good academic performance of students in courses such as science and medicine when they are taught in English. Kola and Sunday (2013), affirm this relationship between English language proficiency and students' academic performance in technical courses. The implication of this is that proficiency in the English language determines students' performance in technical courses (Kola & Sunday, 2013). Based on the previous findings from Kola and Sunday (2013), any student

who is not good in English language may not necessarily be good in their respective academic studies, which are offered in English as LoLT.

Another observation shows that there is a positive relationship between English proficiency as measured by the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and university subject grade point averages when the LoLT is English (Sawir, E., Forbes-Mewett, H., Morgison and Nyland, 2012). This indicates that, IELTS results can predict the level of the student's academic performance. Students who score high marks in IELTS are likely to obtain high academic scores in their respective university programmes. This result is supported by Ghenghesh (2015:1) who argues that the higher the English proficiency of students on entry to vocational education or university, the better their performance in their certificate or degree programmes. Furthermore, Ghenghesh (2015:1) observes that such students are also likely to perform well in their English vocational or university courses. This indicates that English proficiency is one of the determinants of academic performance for vocational students especially where academic courses are offered in the English language. Thus, English can be a tool for vocational educational advancement and can lead to success and sustainable results in different VET sectors. Turnbull (2001:535) argues that the use of English as a LoLT for VET is associated with higher student achievements and is favoured by teachers as students have limited time in classroom and outside classroom to learn in both English and the home language.

A study by Shing and Sim (2011:1), found that EAP should be oriented towards academic rather than general English. By seeing value in EAP classes, students will acquire proficiency in English which seems to be very important for academic success in an English medium environment. According to Shing and Sim (2011:2), EAP is one of the students' needs for a quick and economical use of the English language to pursue a course of academic study. Thus, given the Namibian situation where students use English as a second language from primary education level up to tertiary/higher education including TVET, EAP should play a key role in assisting an English Second Language (ESL) student to develop the kind of English language proficiency that will lead to success in their academic endeavours.

2.6 DISADVANTAGES OF USING ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES AT HIGHER EDUCATION AND TVET LEVELS

The use of English as a LoLT has its own limitations which have been highlighted by numerous authors across the globe. For example, Terry and Yeoh (2013:5) discovered that a low level of English language proficiency was a barrier for students to be successful in their research studies. Moreover, they argued that participants faced two types of linguistic challenges in the academic field; one in academic writing and the other in verbal communication. They found that a high level of academic English skills in both writing and verbal communication was required for research students to ensure that the research experience goes smoothly. Additionally, writing a thesis requires a high level of proficiency in both speaking and writing skills in the English language (Terry & Yeoh, 2013). Using the same logic, Sawir et al. (2012:1) identified English language proficiency as the most problematic aspect of academic learning. Other difficulties encountered in academic writing included listening and oral communication, lack of knowledge of local contextual references, and inadequate vocabulary. Forbes-Mewett et al. (2012:1) conclude that students who take English as second language frequently experience serious language-related difficulties in their academic work. This view is further buttressed by the Hwang et al. (2014:5) which revealed that students with poor English skills are likely to feel uncomfortable, especially in group settings. This can lead to poor academic performance when it comes to group assignments and presentations.

The NEA Research (2007) revealed that greater proficiency in English can only be achieved by spending a lot of time in teaching the students. Additionally, Ibrahim et al. (2014) and the NEA Research (2007) discovered that lack of time for English learning is a barrier for students to develop any useful level of proficiency in English language to support academic studies. Malarz (2017) unveiled that for non-English-speaking students to be able to effectively participate in lessons, they need to achieve a significant level of proficiency in English. This threshold of cognitive academic language proficiency can take between five and seven years to develop in a student's second language (Malarz, 2017:1). Based on the findings by Malarz (2017:1), students who are non-English speakers can take long to develop a high level of proficiency in English

required to successfully complete their academic studies. A similar argument was made by Munguia (2017) who concluded that it takes most students 2 to 5 years to attain a level of proficiency in English. The time period to master English language is too long and results in very poor student academic performance during the first 2 years of studies (Munguia, 2017:103).

Hence, this study posits that although many institutions have adopted the use of English as LoLT, it does not mean it is the best language to use as a LoLT in education (Knapp, 2014). According to Marsh (2006:30), many developing countries in the world including Namibia have chosen to use English as a LoLT in schools especially from Grade 4 upwards, including institutions of higher education such as universities and VTCs. This was set from the national language policy and this is most likely connected to education failure and the high number of dropouts because the language is foreign and has not been mastered fully by most students.

2.7 CURRENT LANGUAGE PRACTICES IN NAMIBIAN CLASSROOMS (AT ALL LEVELS)

Currently, most of the Namibian government schools have adopted the language policy in education which recommends using the mother tongue as the LoLT from Grade 1 to 3. Thus, while English is used as a LoLT from Grade 4 to 12, local languages are still taught subjects from Grade 4 to 12 (RN, 2002). However, some of the private and government schools still have classes in which the LoLT from Grade 1 to 3 is only English. When it comes to Vocational educational institutions in Namibia, all schools use English as a LoLT and all universities in Namibia have adopted the official national language (English) in offering their programmes to students (Frydman, 2011). Nevertheless, Namibia is a multilingual country and students as well as teachers and lecturers may share home languages with their students. As pointed out earlier, students do not use English outside the classroom. The question that arises is what is the impact of this multilingual context on the classroom? In the next section(s) the advantages of translanguaging in classroom settings and possibility of translanguaging at TVET level will be discussed.

2.8 TRANSLANGUAGING

2.8.1 Translanguaging classroom strategies and their advantages

The term “translanguaging” is a translation of a Welsh concept coined by Cen Williams (Baker, Jones & Lewis, 2012; Henderson, Mateus, Martinez & Palmer, 2014). The initial idea for Williams was to bring the use of two languages that run concurrently in a planned and systematic way and use it as a pedagogical tool that will allow switching language mode of input and output in bilingual classes (Baker, Jones & Lewis, 2012; Makalela, 2015). This means in Namibia, where students are taught in English and other languages such as Otjiherero and Oshiwambo at OVTC can be used to successfully understand the taught subjects. Another example is by Makalela (2015:16) who describes how to use translanguaging in a planned language lesson where listening and reading can be conducted in one language (in this case at OVTC, it can be in English), while speaking and writing can be produced in another language which can be either Otjiherero or Oshiwambo. This allows students to use their stronger language to learn effectively during lessons.

In the 21st century, a new understanding of translanguaging emerged as using one language to reinforce the other for the reason of increasing understanding/advancing understanding (Kampittayakul, 2017). This enables students in classrooms to make arguments in both languages and to gain more knowledge through the interaction with other students. According to Kampittayakul (2017:72), in classrooms where translanguaging is used students benefit more cognitively as their minds are challenged and activated to think from one language to another unlike in monolingual practices where only one LoTL is used. Using the same line of thought, Cummins (2007:17-19) established that when the mother tongue has been firmly established in the students’ minds, it allows easy glossing of difficult words, and time saved in this manner optimizes learning opportunities. In addition, “translanguaging has advantages for teachers also as it can fulfil some discursive functions for the teacher includes easy clarification of subject terms to students, to reinforce and to manage the classroom” (Garcia & Leiva, 2014:19).

Positioning and investment are the two practices identified by Palmer et al. (2017:760-769) as translanguaging practising tools for language and literacy teaching. Positioning refers to a discursive process whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced themes or topics (Palmer et al., 2017:760). Furthermore, a teacher can identify students that are incompetent, and once identified they are positioned as inadequate speakers of the particular LoLT. The positioning can create potential to move marginalised individuals into empowering spaces to become high academic performers as they will be motivated to learn using both the LoLT and their home language. Thus, because of its advantages in the education sector, translanguaging has become the focus of research since the 1980s, where strategies for learners to use two languages in a single lesson were investigated (Garcia, 2009:14).

Many scholarly views support translanguaging practices as it assists in terms of brainpower than just focusing on using one language/monolingual (Baker, Jones & Lewis, 2012). As such, translanguaging was identified as a new pedagogical method that could be used as an effective tool in a multilingual community or environment. Thus, because it is used among bilinguals, translanguaging can help to make meaning and shape student experience (Kampittayakul, 2017). In this view, translanguaging blends all the languages available in the environment /classroom to aid effective learning.

2.8.2 Translanguaging challenges in the classroom

According to Kioko (2015:1), learning situations where both the teacher and the student are non-native users of the language of instruction, the teacher struggles as much as the student, particularly at the start of education. Similarly, Trice (2007:112) reveals that students who prefer to speak their native language at their work or during studying are likely to be weak in English language skills. This occurs when there are academic terms which are difficult to understand in English and there is a need to translate such terms into home languages for students to understand the topic at hand. Poor student academic outcomes can be observed when using other languages alongside English

as students will not be able to express themselves in English based examinations (Cummins, 2007:222). Furthermore, teachers who are not fluent in English (L2) are challenged as they tend to depend on their L1 while the use of L2 is significantly low on both parties, teachers and learners (Cummins, 2007).

According to Folke, Ouzia, Bright, De Martino and Filippi (2016:1), bilingual students have less insight into their performance than monolingual students. This indicates that students who are proficient in more than one language are likely not to evaluate their academic performance accurately. On the other hand, monolingual students are likely to succeed in their academic studies as they can accurately evaluate their academic performance and implement measures to succeed in their academic studies. According to Baker, Jones and Lewis (2012:643), during the 1980s it was a challenge in Wales to recognise the use of two languages, as there was a negative belief that bilingualism could cause mental confusion when the ideologies of monolingual and practices were not active. Furthermore, it was argued that translanguaging did not provide constructive school experiences as well as a teaching and intellectual support needed for multilingual children. These views give impetus to the exploration of the Namibian context with its diverse languages. The next section will examine the possibilities of translanguaging in this context.

2.8.3 The possibilities for translanguaging in Namibian classrooms

According to Garcia, (2009:140). “in many Namibian schools, education contexts are multilingual and students utilise a variety of languages at their disposal during lessons; this has led to Translanguaging” Pursuing this view, Marsh et al. (2002:25) suggest that home language can be used to support students who struggle with the language of learning and teaching. They suggest the use of translanguaging by switching from one language to another or the use of a home/community language during a lesson. There are different translanguaging approaches which can be applied in vocational schools to enforce English only in certain types of class tasks against the interest of students, teachers, VTCs and ultimately the surrounding society (Marsh et al., 2002).

This leads to the conclusion that when lessons are delivered in multiple languages (home and English), students are likely to better understand the subject context they are being taught.

With reference to the above, one may argue that students at OVTC with a strong background in the use of L1 may need the L1 to build on their development and proficiency in English where they are weak. This is further buttressed by Makalela (2015:15-17) who observes that languages are interdependent on one another; more than one language can be used to access the same content and improve the understanding of the subject matter. The interdependence of L1 and L2 can initiate skills transfer between the linguistic repertoires that students already possess. Findings from a study by Cummins's (2007:236) show that students are in favour of the use of the L1 because it can help them in writing and reading, and students can think better and write more accurately when using L1 and L2. This intrinsically means that students are likely to be more comfortable when they use L1 and L2 as words they do not understand in English are easily understood in their home languages. Conversely, Cummins (2007:222) argues that allowing students to switch to the other language may allow them to use their weaker language, hence, learn little of the TL or MOI. Significantly, this is not the case in Namibia as English is the only LoLT from Grade 4 and the national language policy does not allow students to use L1 as a LoLT.

2.8.4 Translanguaging and bilingual education

Translanguaging in a bilingual classroom promotes metalinguistic awareness where learners will learn each other's language and be able to participate freely in a classroom (Cummins, 2007). In addition, Cummins (2007:224) points out that a high classroom participation rate is likely to increase the performance of students which is associated with the frequent use of the Target Language (TL) (English) and home language. According to Kioko (2015:376), the use of the learners' home language at the start of school also lessens the burden on teachers, especially where the teacher speaks the local language well. Additionally, students benefit from using their home language in education as they are likely to better understand the curriculum content. Similarly, Hwang et al. (2015:1) discovered a positive effect of multilingualism on academic performance, showing that students who are good in multiple languages are likely to perform better than students

who are good only in the English language. The highest academic scores were associated with students who spoke at least two other languages in addition to English (Hwang et al., 2015:1). If this logic is pursued, it then can be argued that students in dual language programmes develop positive attitude towards education when compared to students of other language and cultural backgrounds (Kioko, 2015; Dual Language Program, 2017).

Hence, bilingual education enables learners to develop the home language alongside a second language like English. Additionally, students who are bilingual are likely to increase their mental flexibility, improve their inter-cultural skills and increase their opportunities for global exchange and trade (Cambridge International Examinations [CIE], 2015). Kinnear (2016:1) also reveals that bilingual students are good at complex skills such as problem solving, planning, and executing challenging assignments. Such a capability can be attributed to the skills explored from learning in different languages.

Kinnear (2016:1) discovered that students who are fluent in two languages have the ability to concentrate during their lessons better than students who are only fluent in English. Additionally, students who speak little or no English are less likely to fall behind developmentally if they enroll in dual-language programmes. Correspondingly, Merritt (2013:1) discovered that speaking two or more languages is a great asset to the cognitive process. According to Merritt (2013:1), bilingual people are good multitaskers, have improved decision-making skills and are smart. This quality of bilingual students can lead to improved academic performance when compared to students who utilise only one language for their academic studies. Reflecting on the same thought, in the Dual Language Program (2017:3) it is noted that when using English and home languages for academic studies, students can develop full oral, reading and writing proficiency in more than one language. This allows them to see their first language in a comparative perspective, which in turn helps them analyse and refine their language use.

Despite its advantages, bilingual education has its flaws as well. For instance, Munguia (2017:3) established valid arguments against bilingual education noting that learning two languages at once confuses students and lowers proficiency in both languages. Regarding teaching English as a second language, the immediate implication is that a dual language approach interferes with the acquisition of high proficiency in English (Munguia, 2017). Furthermore, bilingual education works against the assimilation of students from different language groups and can increase segregation by producing resistance to integration by students and staff. According to the Cambridge International Examinations (2015), students might feel anxious about an innovation such as bilingual education, for instance, not all students will have sufficient English and home language proficiencies to cope with their academic studies. Furthermore, bilingual education is a complex undertaking and requires providing learning materials in different languages which students understand (Cambridge International Examinations, 2015).

2.9 CONCLUSION: THE POSSIBILITIES OF TRANSLANGUAGING AT TVET LEVEL.

Makalela (2015:16) argues that some South African students in his study showed negative attitudes when they were not allowed to use their home languages during classes. This left such students socially affected, left out and side lined (Makalela, 2015). Cantoni (2007:5) contends that English as a medium should be considered from a macro-perspective, for example, the ease of language planning, its functionality beyond national borders, less divisive tendencies between different ethnic groups and educational training on a national rather than a regional basis. Even though Namibia's language policy mentions examples of countries such as Cameroon and India, where local languages have been used as the LoLT with a successful outcome in terms of the pupils' performance (Cantoni, 2007:5), the final decision fell on English as the only viable choice to be the official language in government schools and offices in Namibia.

According to Harris (2011), where the home language is more consistently in use there are better results. Additionally, Murray (2007:75) discovered that when the mother tongue is used as the

medium in the early Grades, with a switch to the second language at a later stage, there may be negative consequences such as subtractive bilingualism. This can have damaging social and cognitive repercussions for both social integration and academic achievement. Thus, there is a need to look at the possibility to implement translanguaging at Vocational and University level. This is based on the positive results from studies conducted where it was proved that the use of home language as one of the LoLTs is associated with improved student academic performance.

Chapter 2 looked at the factors which defined the language education policies in Namibia, by looking at literature from authors such as Ndjoze-Ojo (2013) and Chavez (2016). It can be concluded that the choice of English as a LoLT for schools in Namibia was a political decision. The role of English in education is mainly to aid students to have access to the global education and labour market (see Brady et al., 2013; British Council, 2013). However, some authors have established that the use of English as a LoLT can be an obstacle to the students' academic performance, thus both L1 and L2 are required in translanguaging to improve academic performance (Din, 2015; Harris, 2011; Cantoni, 2007). Problems and challenges in higher education particularly in the VET sector might be centered on the quality of the student assessment systems which in many cases cannot deliver quality graduates ready for the labour market. It was also concluded that the VET sector is not attractive to students who pass their secondary education, hence, only secondary education failures and students with less proficiency in English who tend to struggle in subjects offered in the English language are enrolled. The chapter further established views from authors (Harris, 2011; Cantoni, 2007) who support translanguaging particularly in Namibia. The next section will look at the research methodology adopted to establish the possibility of implementing translanguaging in the VET sector from the students' perspective.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research methodology applied in this study to answer the study's research questions. The chapter also provides a description of the study area, describes the research design, identifies the population and sample selected for the study. The data collection tools and methods used for data analysis and study validity and reliability tests are also covered in this chapter.

3.2 STUDY AREA

This study was carried out at the Okakarara Vocational Training Centre (OVTC), located in Okakarara town which is 90 km from Otjiwarongo town within the Otjozondjupa region of Namibia. The OVTC currently has a total of 29 VET trainers and enrolls an average of 553 VET trainees yearly in the following fields: office administration, hospitality, hairdressing, clothing and production, bricklaying and plastering, carpentry and cabin making, plumbing and pipe fitting, welding and cabinet making, auto-mechanics and electrical general.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study applied a quantitative survey research design where descriptive data was collected. A quantitative approach was selected because the study was preplanned and structured in design so that the data collected from a sample of students could be statistically correlated. The data collected was managed in such a way that descriptive values such as arithmetic mean(s) were produced to support research conclusions. Producing descriptive statistics such as modal values helps to establish the averages used to generalise the findings of the study population. The main reason for using this research design was to ensure that data collected from the sample will produce results which represent the study population. According to Creswell (2012:376), a survey approach refers to a procedure in quantitative research where the researcher administers a survey to the entire population or sample of

people to describe the attitude, opinions, behaviours or characteristics of the population. The survey methodology made it possible to describe the characteristics of a large student population in terms of affordances for translanguageing at OVTC.

According to O'Neill (2006), a quantitative method allows the researcher to conduct a broad survey, and the findings apply to the entire study population. In this study, the researcher was able to determine if there were relationships between variables and, in this case, the affordances in terms of which translanguageing may be a useful teaching and learning strategy. The collected information was presented in numbers, percentages and descriptive form. Responses to an open-ended question which was included at the end of the questionnaire were coded, summarised and presented qualitatively in text format. One of the challenges of the quantitative method is that it is time consuming, and the larger the sample the more time it takes to collect data (O'Neill, 2006).

3.4 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The population of the study consisted of 553 first- and second-year students (level 1 with English as a subject = 193, level 2 = 177 and level 3 = 183) who were registered at OVTC for the 2017 and 2018 academic years. All 553 trainees were eligible to participate in this study. Although not all of them had English communication as a subject, they were all taught in English in all their modules. The study's unit of analysis was the individual student's responses to the questionnaire.

Required sample size

A formula to get the right representative sample size of the population was adopted from Qualtrics (2020) as highlighted below:

$$\text{Sample Size} = \text{Necessary Sample Size} = (Z\text{-score})^2 * \text{StdDev} * (1 - \text{StdDev}) / (\text{margin of error})^2$$

StdDev = Standard Deviation = 0.5, so as to be 95% confident in the research findings, the margin of error is 5% (0.05) and the Z-score = 1.96.

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Sample size} &= ((1.96)^2 \times 0.5(0.5)) / (0.05)^2 \\
 &= 0.9604/0.0025 \\
 &= 384.16 \\
 &384 \text{ students are needed}
 \end{aligned}$$

According to Team (2020), calculating the right sample size is crucial in order to avoid under and over sampling. Under sampling leads to poor un-generalisable survey results while over sampling tends to make survey undertaking too costly.

The following finite population correction formula adopted from Fluid Surveys (2014) was applied to get the true sample size which considers the current study population size.

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{True Sample} &= (\text{Sample Size} * \text{Population}) / (\text{Sample Size} + \text{Population} - 1) \\
 n &= (no * N) / (no + N - 1).
 \end{aligned}$$

Where n = sample size,

no = is the sample size without considering the finite population correlation factor

N = is the population.

$$\text{True sample size} = ((384 * 553) / (384 + 553 - 1)) = 227$$

Therefore, the minimum required sample size per study level strata was 227.

The breakdown of the minimum sample size based on the study level population size was as follows:

Students in level 1 sample size = 79

Students in level 2 sample size = 73

Students in level 3 sample size = 75

This means that even if some students chose not to participate, it will still be possible to generalise the research results to the study population at 95% confidence level.

Actual sample size after data collection

Based on Table 3.1 below, the required sample size of 227 was achieved as the actual sample size total was 331. The required sample size was exceeded because many students were willing to be part of the study.

Table 3.1: Actual sample size after data collection

Study level	Count of students
1	83
2	122
3	126
Grand Total	331

3.5 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT AND DATA COLLECTION

A self-administered structured survey questionnaire was distributed to students to complete after VET lessons or per appointments with students. A colleague assisted to distribute the questionnaires to students. The researcher was responsible for the data entry, cleaning and analysis.

Likert scale questions were adopted in the questionnaire to measure the students' perceptions when it came to their ability in terms of English communication skills, to assess the benefits and barriers of using English and home languages during lessons. Questionnaire items 1 to 3 were grouped to define the "English communication skills construct," while question 4 to 6 formed the "Benefits of English construct". Additionally, questions 8 to 10 defined the "Barriers of English construct" and questions 12 and 13 were used to establish "Using other languages in the classroom construct". The categories or response options for the Likert scale questions were definitely agree, agree, neutral, disagree, definitely disagree; never used, less used, mostly used, often, and very often. The full questionnaire used during data collection is attached as appendix A.

During data collection, completed questionnaires were checked for errors while the respondents were present to identify inconsistent or missing data so that there is no need for follow-up data collection efforts.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

3.6.1 Quantitative data analysis

Collected data using questionnaires were entered into Microsoft Excel and imported to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) programme for data analysis. According to Russel and Booth (2005:1), by using SPSS, the data is imported easily from Excel files where data can be used to produce graphical presentations for reporting. Data cleaning in SPSS involved producing a frequency table for each variable to identify outliers, missing and inconsistent data in the survey dataset. A Chi-square test in SPSS was used to establish relationships between variables at 5% alpha. Bar graphs and tables were produced in SPSS and presented as study findings in chapter 4.

3.6.2 Qualitative data analysis

Qualitative data were coded and information summarised and used to establish findings per respective themes/research question. A deductive qualitative data approach was used as the data were grouped and then the researcher analysed it to establish similarities and differences with reference to results from the quantitative approach. This process assisted to reach the research conclusions per respective research question.

3.7 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Before the actual data collection, a pilot study was conducted with randomly selected students to ensure that the instrument (questionnaire) elicited data that would address the research objectives. This exercise assisted to ensure high reliability scores for the survey; the consistency of the measurement instrument was enhanced as questions were revised by removing irrelevant and adding relevant questions and response options. Cronbach's alpha was used as the questionnaire had multiple Likert questions measuring each respective construct. The Cronbach's alpha assessed the reliability of the questionnaire to measure each

respective construct or scale. Furthermore, as reported earlier in the population and sampling section, the sample was compared to the population characteristics to assess the representativeness of the survey findings.

Questionnaire Reliability Test Results

Reliability is the degree to which a questionnaire or instrument measures accurately each time it is used under the same conditions with the same subjects (Field, 2009). Item analysis was done to assess the reliability of the different constructs of the students' perceptions using the Cronbach's alpha values. Cronbach alpha values for reliability can be categorised as follows:

- ✓ Cronbach alpha above 0.8: good reliability
- ✓ Cronbach alpha between 0.6 and 0.8: acceptable reliability
- ✓ Cronbach alpha below 0.6: unacceptable reliability.

Questionnaire Reliability per Construct

Table 3.2: Reliability Statistics Per Construct

Construct Name	Questions forming the construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	N of Items
Using other languages in the classroom	1. You are able to speak English fluently	0.846	0.742	3
	2. You are able to write fluently in English		0.819	
	3. You are able to communicate fluently in English		0.796	
Benefits of English	4. English helps you communicate with people who don't understand your language	0.756	0.655	3
	5. English helps you to communicate with your lecturer and other students during lessons		0.626	
	6. English is useful because you are able to access information from many English academic resources		0.749	
Barriers of English	8. You are not able to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English	0.687	0.575	3
	9. You don't understand difficult academic terms in English during lessons		0.567	
	10. You see English as an obstacle to your academic performance		0.639	
Using other languages in the classroom	12. Using home languages in the classroom will make it easy to understand difficult English academic terms	0.572	.	2
	13. Translation of English texts will be useful to improve my understanding		.	
Average	All questions	0.715		

Based on the results in Table 3.2, on average the questionnaire was 0.715 out of 1 representing 72% of reliability. This stipulates that the questionnaire was of acceptable reliability. It must be noted that some constructs recorded very high and more reliable scores than others. For instance, the English communication skills construct recorded a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.85 out of 1 representing 85% of reliability while using other languages in the classroom construct recorded a very low unacceptable reliability score of 0.57. This is because this construct consisted of only two items. Thus, the questionnaire had a good reliability when assessing students' English communication skills than using other languages in the classroom construct.

Table 3.2 also provides the item-total statistics of the English communication skills construct, where the "Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted" indicates the expected new Cronbach's alpha. Based on Table 3.2, if question 1 is deleted from the construct, the construct Cronbach's alpha will decline from 0.85 to 0.74, thus questions 1 to 3 were retained to maintain a Cronbach's alpha of 0.85 for the English communication skills construct. Similarly, if question 8 is deleted the Barriers of the English construct's Cronbach's alpha will decline from 0.687 to 0.575.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

To ensure that ethical issues are considered in this research, the researcher obtained permission from the center manager for OVTC before the investigation was undertaken (see Appendix B). Also, the research ethical clearance certificate was obtained from the University of Stellenbosch (see Appendix C). The study was explained beforehand to the participants so that those who were not willing to take part in the research were left out from the beginning. The participation in the survey was voluntary and all students had the right to refuse to complete the survey questionnaires. The information that was collected from the students and OVTC was and will be kept confidential. Research results were only produced at an aggregated level to maintain respondent confidentiality. No names of the students were recorded on the questionnaires, but code names were created to identify the students.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the findings of the study based on the data collected using a questionnaire which was distributed to 331 students out of a total population of 553 VET students at OVTC. As reported in chapter 3, the study sample consisted of 83 students out of a sub population of 193 Level 1 students, 122 students out of a sub population of 177 Level 2 students and 126 students out of a sub population of 183 Level 3 students. Quantitative data which were collected at OVTC on students' perceptions of English as well as Translanguaging as a LoLT, were analysed using SPSS. The results are presented in graphs, tables and as descriptive statistics (cross tabulations) to answer research questions. Qualitative data were analysed using a thematic approach to aid quantitative findings in answering research questions. In this chapter, student demographics, English communication skills, benefits and barriers of English will be explored. Furthermore, the perceptions of the students on the possibility of using home languages alongside with English will be established.

4.2 STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Student representativeness of the study population

Based on the results in Table 4.1 below, the study sample is representative of the study population in terms of gender and course distribution. This indicates that the sample data will produce valid survey results which can be generalised to the study population.

Table 4.1: Student (Sample) representativeness of the study population

Course Name	Population size(#)		Population (proportion of total) %		Sample size (#)		Sample (proportion of total)%	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Auto-mechanics	58	5	10.4%	1.0%	35	1	10.6%	0.3%
Bricklaying & Plastering	36	2	6.5%	0.4%	24	0	7.3%	0.0%
Carpentry & Cabinet making	37	8	6.7%	1.5%	24	6	7.3%	1.8%
Clothing & Production	0	28	0.0%	5.0%	0	19	0.0%	5.7%
Electrical General	61	17	11.0%	3.0%	39	7	11.8%	2.1%
Hairdressing	0	28	0.0%	5.0%	0	16	0.0%	4.8%
Hospitality	5	65	0.9%	11.7%	1	39	0.3%	11.8%
Office Administration	12	72	2.1%	13.0%	10	49	3.0%	14.8%
Plumbing & Pipe Fitting	50	28	9.0%	5.0%	28	11	8.5%	3.3%
Welding & Cabinet Making	40	3	7.3%	0.6%	7	15	2.1%	4.5%
Total	298	255	53.9%	46.1%	168	163	50.8%	49.2%

Respondents per course name

The majority of students at 17.8% are enrolled for Office Administration while hair dressing recorded the lowest number of students at 4.8% as shown in Table 4.1 above. This is because hair dressing contributed only 5% to the study population as demonstrated in Table 4.1 above.

Respondents per Course Level (Year of Study)

The majority of the students at 38% are enrolled at course Level 3 (year 3) (Namibia Qualification Framework Level 3), 37% are enrolled for Level 2 while only 25% are at course Level 1 (year 1). It was observed during data collection that Level 3 students were more confident and willing to participate in the study than Levels 1 and 2 students. This could be because they have more tertiary experience and they are more comfortable with trainers compared to students in Levels 1 and 2.

Respondents per home language

The majority of students at 64% speak Otjiherero, 32.4% speak Oshiwambo, 0.9% Damara, 1.2% Afrikaans and Khoekhoegowab and only 0.3% speak Silozi. This finding was expected as OVTC is located in an area highly populated by Otjiherero speaking people. The finding is also supported by Cantoni (2007:25) who discovered that in Namibia most schools in remote areas are dominated by specific members of a language or ethnic group.

Gender of respondents

The majority of the students at 51% are males while 49% are females. This finding informs us that the data collected using the questionnaire is representative of the gender distribution in the population.

4.3 PRESENTATION OF DATA

The study results will be presented as follows; first descriptive statistics from frequency tables mainly counts and percentage responses for each question per construct as formulated in chapter 3 will be displayed and interpreted. Secondly, descriptive statistics from cross tabulation (crosstab) will be explored to assess any correlation between variables. Lastly, findings from open ended questions will be shared.

4.3.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FROM FREQUENCY TABLES

4.3.1.1 ENGLISH COMMUNICATION SKILLS CONSTRUCT

Table 4.3.1. Descriptive Statistics for English Communication Skills Construct

English Communication Skills Construct	Agree or Definitely Agree	Neutral	Disagree or Definitely Disagree
Speaking English fluently	72.5%	26.0%	1.5%
Write in English fluently	74.0%	23.0%	3.0%
Ability to communicate in English fluently	76.6%	21.0%	2.4%

Speaking English fluently

Based on the results in Table 4.3.1, out of 330 students who responded, 72.5% agree or definitely agree, 1.5% disagree or definitely disagree that they are able to speak English fluently while 26% are neutral as they do not agree nor disagree that they are able to speak English fluently. These results show that 26% of the students who are neutral are unable to rate themselves when it comes to speaking English. Even though the majority of the students indicated that they speak English fluently this might not be the reality as established by Malarz (2017:1) who states that students who are non-English speakers can take long to develop a high level of proficiency in English required to successfully complete their academic studies.

Write fluently in English

The results in Table 4.3.1 highlight that the majority of students at 74% agree or definitely agree that they are able to write fluently in English, while only 3% disagree or definitely disagree. As was the case with speaking English fluently, more than 20% (23%) were neutral as they were not able to agree or disagree that they are able to write fluently in English. Although the majority of the OVTC students indicated that they can write fluently in English – probably because only English is used for communication at OVTC (Kinnear, 2016:1) it is noted that more than 20% are unsure of their ability hence they marked the option ‘neutral’. Also, the findings on the perceptions of the OVTC students’ writing skills might be highly influenced by the competent based VET education system offered in Namibia where students are assessed mostly based on their ability to complete tasks rather than a theory/formal examination where writing fluently might be required. For instance, a student doing brick laying is expected to be able to build a house when completing a year or Level 3 of VET and no advanced form of assessment in writing is usually administered to such students.

Ability to communicate fluently in English

The results in Table 4.3.1 highlight that the majority of the students at 76.6% agree or definitely agree that they are able to communicate fluently in English while only 2.4% disagree or definitely disagree. 21% (Neutral) are not sure if they are able to communicate fluently in English. Most of

the students who took part in the study are Level 2 and 3 meaning they have completed their English at Level 1. What this means is that they have a lot of practice to communicate in English and they are likely to be more fluent than the first year students. This concurs with Azeem, Bashir and Dogar (2011:35-40) who note that learning to speak or to communicate fluently requires a lot of practice.

4.3.1.2 BENEFITS OF ENGLISH CONSTRUCT

Table 4.3.2. Descriptive Statistics for Benefits of English Construct

Benefits of English Construct	Agree or Definitely Agree	Neutral	Disagree or Definitely Disagree
English helps to communicate with people who do not understand your language	98.2%	0.6%	1.2%
English helps to communicate with lecturer and other students during lessons	97.5%	1.6%	0.9%
English is useful to access information from many English academic resources	93.9%	3.7%	2.4%

English helps to communicate with people who do not understand your language

Table 4.3.2 stipulates that the majority of the students at 98.2% definitely agree or agree that English helps them to communicate with people who do not understand their home language while only 1.2% definitely disagree or disagree, and 0.6% are neutral. This finding is in line with Kinnear (2016:1) who established that English can help a student to communicate with other people with whom the student does not share the same L1.

English helps to communicate with lecturers and other students during lessons

Results in Table 4.3.2 indicate that the majority of the students at 97.5% definitely agree or agree that English helps them to communicate with their lecturers and other students during lessons. On

the other hand, 0.9% of the students disagree or definitely disagree, while 1.6% (Neutral) of the students are not sure if English helps them to communicate with their lecturers and other students. The above findings are reinforcing the OVTC language policy which stipulates that only English must be used as a LoLT during lessons. The same is true of the government schools and offices in Namibia which have English as the official language (Cantoni, 2007). As such, the findings revealed that students at OVTC are formally not allowed to use home languages during lessons.

English is useful to access information from many English academic resources

Results in Table 4.3.2 indicate that the majority of the students at 93.9% agree or definitely agree that English is useful to access information from many English academic resources, while only 2.4% definitely disagree or disagree. Additionally, 3.7% (Neutral) are not sure if English is useful for them to access information from many English academic resources. English does not only enable students to have access to English academic material but it is also attributed a global status when it comes to academic writing for publication (Curry & Lillis, 2011).

4.3.1.3 BARRIERS OF ENGLISH CONSTRUCT

Table 4.3.3. Descriptive Statistics for Barriers of English Construct

Barriers of English Construct	Agree or Definitely Agree	Neutral	Disagree or Definitely Disagree
Home language makes it easy to understand difficult English academic terms	26.0%	14.0%	60.0%
Translation of English texts will be useful to improve my understanding	38.2%	20.4%	41.4%
English is an obstacle to academic performance	26.0%	7.0%	67.0%

Unable to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English

Table 4.3.3 indicates that the majority of the students at 60% disagree or definitely disagree, while 26% agree or definitely agree that they are unable to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English. Additionally, 14% of the students are neutral as they are not sure if they are unable to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English. This finding suggests that at OVTC there are many students (25%) who still experience serious language-related difficulties in their academic work where the LoLT is English (Sawir et al., 2012). This indicates that the implementation of translanguaging where both English and home language are in use as a LoLT could eliminate language-related difficulties experienced by one-quarter of the students at OVTC.

Do not understand difficult academic terms in English during lessons

Table 4.3.3 indicates that 38.2% of the students agree or definitely agree that they do not understand difficult academic terms in English during lessons, while 41.4% disagree or definitely disagree. The results also show that 20.4% (Neutral) of the students are not sure if they do not understand difficult academic terms in English during lessons. Overall, the majority of the students disagree and definitely disagree that they do not understand difficult academic terms in English during lessons. It must be noted that differences between students who definitely agree or agree and definitely disagree or disagree is insignificant as it is only 3%. Nevertheless, students' failure to understand difficult academic terms at OVTC could be due to a similar assertion by Marsh et al. (2002:11) that the low exposure of students to the English language in the community limits the effectiveness of learning and teaching as teachers and students work in a second language (L2). Based on observations at OVTC, students tend to communicate in their home languages and they may not be that familiar with advanced English academic terms. This indicates that using both English and home language (translanguaging) as LoLT could be beneficial to many students at OVTC.

English is an obstacle to academic performance

Table 4.3.3 stipulates that the majority of the students at 67% disagree or definitely disagree that English is an obstacle to academic performance while 26% agree or definitely agree and only 7% are neutral. OVTC students might not be able to evaluate their academic performance based on the LoLT as no assessments or analysis were conducted between academic performance and English as LoLT. In this regard, students provided just their perceptions on whether English has an impact on their performance. A quarter of the students who agreed and definitely agreed that English is an obstacle to academic performance could possibly benefit from the use of English and home language as a LoLT. This is in line with Kampittayakul (2017:78-88) who established that using two languages as a LoLT can enable students to understand topics being taught better.

4.3.1.4 USING OTHER LANGUAGES IN THE CLASSROOM CONSTRUCT

Table 4.3.4. Descriptive Statistics for Using other Languages in the Classroom Construct

Using other languages in the classroom construct	Agree or Definitely Agree	Neutral	Disagree or Definitely Disagree
Home language makes it easy to understand difficult English academic terms	64.0%	10.0%	26.0%
Translation of English texts will be useful to improve my understanding	82.9%	6.0%	11.1%
Lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding	62.0%	5.0%	33.0%
Using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance	42%	7%	51%
Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects	79%	9%	12%

Home language makes it easy to understand difficult English academic terms

Table 4.3.4 stipulates that 64% of the students agree or definitely agree, 26% disagree or definitely disagree that using home language makes it easy to understand difficult English academic terms, while only 10% of the students were neutral as they do not agree or disagree. The majority think that the home languages make it easy to understand difficult English academic terms. This finding is supported by Harris (2011:58) who points out that 83% of the students in Namibia prefer learning in their home language. Thus, students at OVTC are no exception as the majority of them agree or definitely agree that L1 could be useful during lessons. However, it might not be possible to use only home languages as most academic materials are in English, thus translanguaging where English and home languages are applied as a LoLT might be a preferred option for both students and lecturers, particularly when one compares these results to those in Table 4.3.2.

Translation of English texts will be useful to improve my understanding

Based on the results in Table 4.3.4, 82.9% of the students agree or definitely agree, 11.1% disagree or definitely disagree that the translation of English texts will be useful to improve their understanding, while only 6% are neutral. The majority of the students are positive that the translation of English texts into home languages might improve their understanding. This finding concurs with Cummins (2007:224) who believes that the high performance of students is associated with a frequent use of the Target Language (TL) (English) and home language. This indicates that translanguaging if implemented at OVTC might assist students to improve their performance.

Lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding

Based on the results in Table 4.3.4, 62% of the students agree or definitely agree, 33% disagree or definitely disagree that lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding, while only 5% (neutral) neither agree nor disagree. According to Kioko (2015:1), learning situations where both the teacher and the student are non-native users of the language of instruction, the teacher struggles as much as the student. Even though the majority of the students

at OVTC agree or definitely agree that lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding, students and trainers might experience challenges to implement lessons where the LoLT is both L1 and L2 (Kioko, 2015). This indicates that translanguaging at VET level will have to be accompanied by policy and special training of lecturers before full implementation at OVTC.

Using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance

According to the results in Table 4.3.4, 51% of the students disagree or definitely disagree, 42% agree or definitely agree that using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance, while only 7% (Neutral) neither agree nor disagree. A slight number of the students disagree and definitely disagree that using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance. This student perception is supported by Cantoni (2007:5) who established that countries such as Cameroon and India, where local languages have been used as the LoLT, had a successful outcome in terms of the students' performance.

Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects

The results in Table 4.3.4 show that 79% of the students definitely agree or agree, 8% disagree and 4% definitely agree that sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects, while only 9% are neutral as they do not agree nor disagree. This is contrary to the findings of the students who agree or disagree that "Using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance." Arguably, this result indicates that students at OVTC are not sure whether translanguaging can assist them to improve their academic performance as they supported and at the same time did not support translanguaging approaches to teaching and learning. It must also be noted that, even though majority of students are in agreement that sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects it might not be the case at the end of the day. This is based on studies such as that of researchers from UNESCO (2016) where it was revealed that Namibia's basic education cannot provide a strong foundation for learning in VET. Moreover, as pointed out earlier, most

VET students in Namibia are Grade 10 and Grade 12 failures with poor results in English (Harris, 2011; Cantoni, 2007). As a result, the low level of English language proficiency can be a barrier for OVTC students to be successful in their studies (Terry & Yeoh, 2013).

How often do you use English in the classroom during a lesson?

83% of the students mostly, often or very often use English during lessons while 17% use English less or they never used English in the classroom during a lesson. However, not using English during lessons at OVTC is unlikely as English is the LoLT. This finding is in line with Chavez (2016:190) who reiterated that English was selected and enforced with a government policy to be a Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) in schools especially at post primary level. Thus, students and lecturers at OVTC are obliged to use English as LoLT.

Home language usage in the classroom during a lesson

70% of the students use home language minimally or never use home language while 30% use home language in the classroom during lessons most of the time or often or very often. This finding corresponds to the results on the question “How often do you use English in the classroom during a lesson?” which revealed that the majority (83%) of the students mostly, often or very often use English during lessons. Based on the latter finding, many students (30%) are already using home languages during lessons, thus using English and home language as a LoLT leads one to speculate that translanguaging might not be a foreign exercise at OVTC. The use of home language(s) during lessons could also be the result of students who prefer to be taught in more than one language. This could be a similar situation to the one described by Van der Walt and Steyn (2002) where some of the students at Stellenbosch University preferred to be taught in English and Afrikaans.

4.3.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FROM CROSS TABULATIONS

4.3.2.1 ENGLISH COMMUNICATION SKILLS CONSTRUCT

You are able to speak English fluently per course

A high percentage (72.7%) of students in welding and cabinet making agreed that they can speak English fluently while the hospitality students recorded the lowest percentage with 45.0%. Differences regarding the students' perceptions per course of study when it comes to the ability to speak English fluently resulted in a correlation between course and speaking English fluently; this finding is supported by the results in Table 4.3. Still, in Table 4.3, the p-value (Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)) is at 0.001 which indicates that this correlation is significant at 0.05 as the probability value (p-value) is less than 5%. Surprisingly, the very people who need to use English on a daily basis (in hospitality), are the ones who say that they do not speak English fluently. This could be because the hospitality students are required to complete more advanced English subjects than welding and cabinet making and possibly rate themselves lower because they struggle with the advanced subjects. Moreover, OVTC hospitality students might be experiencing difficulties due to inadequate vocabulary which can lead to oral communication challenges during their advanced English language courses.

Table 4.2: Crosstab of Course Name * 1. You are able to speak English fluently

		1. You are able to speak English fluently					Total
		Definitely disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Definitely agree	
Course Office	Count	0	1	17	35	6	59
Name Administration	% within Course Name	0.0%	1.7%	28.8%	59.3%	10.2%	100.0%
Hospitality	Count	0	0	14	18	8	40
	% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	35.0%	45.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Hairdressing	Count	0	0	12	1	3	16
	% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	75.0%	6.3%	18.8%	100.0%
Clothing & Production	Count	0	1	0	9	8	18
	% within Course Name	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%	50.0%	44.4%	100.0%
Bricklaying & Plastering	Count	0	0	5	15	4	24
	% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	20.8%	62.5%	16.7%	100.0%
Carpentry & Cabinet Making	Count	0	0	10	18	2	30
	% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	60.0%	6.7%	100.0%
Plumbing & Pipe Fitting	Count	0	1	6	25	7	39
	% within Course Name	0.0%	2.6%	15.4%	64.1%	17.9%	100.0%
Welding & Cabinet Making	Count	0	2	1	16	3	22
	% within Course Name	0.0%	9.1%	4.5%	72.7%	13.6%	100.0%
Auto Mechanics	Count	0	0	9	18	9	36
	% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Electrical General	Count	0	0	12	25	9	46
	% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	26.1%	54.3%	19.6%	100.0%
Total	Count	0	5	86	180	59	330
	% within Course Name	0.0%	1.5%	26.1%	54.5%	17.9%	100.0%

Table 4.3: Chi-Square Tests for Course Name * 1. You are able to speak English fluently

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	63.770 ^a	27	.000
N of Valid Cases	330		

You are able to write fluently in English per course

Table 4.4 below indicates a high percentage (77.3%) of students in welding and cabinet making agreeing or claiming that they can write fluently in English while the hairdressing students recorded the lowest percentage (18.8%) agreeing that they are able to write fluently in English. The differences in the students' responses on their ability to write fluently in English per their respective courses of study resulted in a significant correlation between the course of study and ability to write fluently in English. The correlation is significant as shown by the results in Table 4.5 which indicate that the p-value is less than 0.05 when the course studied and ability to write in English fluently was cross tabulated. It must be noted that the hairdressing results are skewed as the majority were neutral, thus one cannot conclude that most of them agree or definitely agree that they are able to write in English fluently. The findings here could also be the result of welding and cabinet making students being more successful in their non-language subjects (that are offered in English) and therefore they may feel that they have mastered the English language fully, in contrast to the hairdressing students (Ankrah, 2015). This finding links up with that mentioned under the heading *You are able to write fluently in English per course* above.

Table 4.4: Crosstab of Course Name * 2. You are able to write fluently in English

			2. You are able to write fluently in English					Total
			Definitely disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Definitely agree	
Course Name	Office Administration	Count	0	1	17	33	8	59
		% within Course Name	0.0%	1.7%	28.8%	55.9%	13.6%	100.0%
	Hospitality	Count	0	0	11	21	8	40
		% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	27.5%	52.5%	20.0%	100.0%
	Hairdressing	Count	0	1	9	3	3	16
		% within Course Name	0.0%	6.3%	56.3%	18.8%	18.8%	100.0%
	Clothing & Production	Count	0	0	2	10	6	18
		% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	11.1%	55.6%	33.3%	100.0%
	Bricklaying & Plastering	Count	0	2	5	15	2	24
		% within Course Name	0.0%	8.3%	20.8%	62.5%	8.3%	100.0%
	Carpentry & Cabinet Making	Count	0	1	6	20	3	30
		% within Course Name	0.0%	3.3%	20.0%	66.7%	10.0%	100.0%
	Plumbing & Pipe Fitting	Count	0	1	7	22	9	39
		% within Course Name	0.0%	2.6%	17.9%	56.4%	23.1%	100.0%
	Welding & Cabinet Making	Count	0	3	0	17	2	22
		% within Course Name	0.0%	13.6%	0.0%	77.3%	9.1%	100.0%
	Auto Mechanics	Count	0	1	6	19	10	36
		% within Course Name	0.0%	2.8%	16.7%	52.8%	27.8%	100.0%
	Electrical General	Count	0	0	13	24	9	46
		% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	28.3%	52.2%	19.6%	100.0%
Total		Count	0	10	76	184	60	330
		% within Course Name	0.0%	3.0%	23.0%	55.8%	18.2%	100.0%

Table 4.5: Chi-Square Tests for Course Name * 2. You are able to write fluently in English

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	46.966 ^a	27	.010
N of Valid Cases	330		

You are able to communicate in English fluently per course

Differences in the students' perceptions on their ability to communicate fluently in English per the respective courses of study resulted in a correlation between the course studied and the ability to communicate fluently in English. This relationship is based on the results presented in Tables 4.6 and 4.7 below. A high percentage (62.5%) of students in bricklaying and plastering agreed that they can communicate fluently in English compared to a low percentage of 44.4% of students in clothing and production who also agree. The correlation between the students' ability to communicate fluently in English and course is significant at 0.05 as p-value is less than 5% (p-value = 0.001) as displayed in Table 4.7 below.

Across courses, the majority of the students at 52% agreed and 24.6% definitely agreed that they are able to communicate in English fluently. It is surprising that the Hairdressing students who might need a high level of English communication skills when performing their jobs after their studies recorded the lowest percentage of students at 6.3% agreed and 18.8% definitely agreed that they are able to communicate fluently in English. It must be noted that the majority of the hairdressing students were neutral and none of the students disagree or strongly disagree that they are able to communicate fluently in English.

Table 4.6: Crosstab of Course Name * 3. You are able to communicate fluently in English

			3. You are able to communicate fluently in English					Total
			Definitely disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Definitely agree	
Course Name	Office Administration	Count	0	3	13	30	13	59
		% within Course Name	0.0%	5.1%	22.0%	50.8%	22.0%	100.0%
	Hospitality	Count	1	0	11	20	8	40
		% within Course Name	2.5%	0.0%	27.5%	50.0%	20.0%	100.0%
	Hairdressing	Count	0	0	12	1	3	16
		% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	75.0%	6.3%	18.8%	100.0%
	Clothing & Production	Count	0	0	1	8	9	18
		% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%	44.4%	50.0%	100.0%
	Bricklaying & Plastering	Count	0	0	4	15	5	24
		% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	62.5%	20.8%	100.0%
	Carpentry & Cabinet Making	Count	0	1	5	19	5	30
		% within Course Name	0.0%	3.3%	16.7%	63.3%	16.7%	100.0%
	Plumbing & Pipe Fitting	Count	0	1	4	22	12	39
		% within Course Name	0.0%	2.6%	10.3%	56.4%	30.8%	100.0%
	Welding & Cabinet Making	Count	1	1	0	15	4	21
		% within Course Name	4.8%	4.8%	0.0%	71.4%	19.0%	100.0%
	Auto Mechanics	Count	0	0	6	19	11	36
		% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	52.8%	30.6%	100.0%
	Electrical General	Count	0	0	13	22	11	46
		% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	28.3%	47.8%	23.9%	100.0%
Total		Count	2	6	69	171	81	329
		% within Course Name	0.6%	1.8%	21.0%	52.0%	24.6%	100.0%

Table 4.7: Chi-Square Tests: Course Name*3. You are able to communicate fluently in English

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	69.314 ^a	36	.001
N of Valid Cases	329		

Based on the results in Tables 4.8 and 4.9, a positive correlation between the course level and students' ability to communicate fluently in English prevailed. The correlation is due to a high percentage (63.9%) of students in Level 1 (see Table 4.8) who agree that they can communicate fluently in English compared to a low percentage of 40.8% of students in Level 3 who also agree. The correlation between course level and student ability to communicate fluently in English is significant at 0.05 (95% confidence level), as p-value is less than 5% (p-value = 0.027) as displayed in Table 4.9 below. This could be a result of the first year students enrolled in Basic English courses compared to the third years who are doing English at advanced level. It could also be that the senior students have had more exposure to job environments where they realised they may not be as fluent as they thought. This result is contrary to Malarz (2017:1) and Munguia's (2017:3) findings as they argue that the level of proficiency in English required to successfully complete academic studies is positive when associated with the period of studying in the English language. As a result, it is surprising that more junior students than senior students at OVTC indicated that they are able to communicate fluently in English. This could be because they do not yet know what they do not know!

Table 4.8: Crosstab of Course Level * 3. You are able to communicate fluently in English

			3. You are able to communicate fluently in English					
			Definitely disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Definitely agree	Total
Course Level	Level 1	Count	0	3	13	53	14	83
		% within Course Level	0.0%	3.6%	15.7%	63.9%	16.9%	100.0%
	Level 2	Count	0	1	23	67	30	121
		% within Course Level	0.0%	0.8%	19.0%	55.4%	24.8%	100.0%
	Level 3	Count	2	2	33	51	37	125
		% within Course Level	1.6%	1.6%	26.4%	40.8%	29.6%	100.0%
Total	Count	2	6	69	171	81	329	
	% within Course Level	0.6%	1.8%	21.0%	52.0%	24.6%	100.0%	

Table 4.9: Chi-Square Tests for Course Level *3. You are able to communicate fluently in English

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	17.324 ^a	8	.027
N of Valid Cases	329		

4.3.2.2 BENEFITS OF ENGLISH CONSTRUCT

English helps to communicate with lecturers and other students during lessons per course

There is a significant correlation between the course studied and the responses of the students on how English helps them to communicate with their lecturers and other students as p-value in Table 4.11 is less than 0.05. Thus, English language can be an asset beyond the classroom for OVTC students. For instance, students from the Office Administration trade are likely to communicate with people all over the world at their workplaces with a view to exploring business opportunities using the English language. The results in Table 4.10 indicate that a high percentage (73.3%) of the students in carpentry and cabin making agree or claim that English helps them to communicate with their lecturers and other students during lessons. 69% of the students in office administration

definitely agree. Additionally, 67.4% of the students within the electrical field definitely agree that English helps them to communicate with their lecturers or other students. No students indicated that they definitely disagreed.

Table 4.10: Crosstab of Course Name * 5. English helps you to communicate with your lecturer and other students during lessons

		5. English helps you to communicate with your lecturer and other students during lessons					Total
		Definitely disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Definitely agree	
Course Office	Count	0	0	3	15	40	58
Name Administration	% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	5.2%	25.9%	69.0%	100.0%
Hospitality	Count	0	0	0	19	21	40
	% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	47.5%	52.5%	100.0%
Hairdressing	Count	0	1	1	5	9	16
	% within Course Name	0.0%	6.3%	6.3%	31.3%	56.3%	100.0%
Clothing & Production	Count	0	0	0	6	12	18
	% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%
Bricklaying & Plastering	Count	0	2	0	8	14	24
	% within Course Name	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	33.3%	58.3%	100.0%
Carpentry & Cabine Making	Count	0	0	0	22	8	30
	% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	73.3%	26.7%	100.0%
Plumbing & Pipe Fitting	Count	0	0	0	17	22	39
	% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	43.6%	56.4%	100.0%
Welding & Cabinet Making	Count	0	0	0	7	15	22
	% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	31.8%	68.2%	100.0%
Auto Mechanics	Count	0	0	0	12	24	36
	% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%
Electrical General	Count	0	0	1	14	31	46
	% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%	30.4%	67.4%	100.0%
Total	Count	0	3	5	125	196	329
	% within Course Name	0.0%	0.9%	1.5%	38.0%	59.6%	100.0%

Table 4.11: Chi-Square Tests for Course Name * 5. English helps you to communicate with your lecturer and other students during lessons

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	55.767 ^a	27	.001
N of Valid Cases	329		

English helps you to communicate with your lecturers and other students per course level

There is a significant correlation (as p-value < 0.05 in Table 4.13) between course level and the responses of students on how English helps them to communicate with their lecturers and other students. The results in Table 4.12 indicate that a high percentage (67.2%) of students in Level 2 definitely agree that English helps them to communicate with their lecturers and other students during lessons compared to 52.4% of the students in Level 1. This difference in terms of how English helps them to communicate with their lecturers and other students per course level could be due to the years of experience in VET education, as Level 1 students have not yet completed a year at OVTC studying in English (second language). This conclusion is also supported by Malarz (2017:1) who notes that the more years of learning in second language, the higher the students' proficiency in the second language. These results contradict the results in Table 4.8 in which the majority of the first- year students indicate that they are fluent in English. This could be due to the many students at OVTC in Level 1 not realising the value of English to communicate with their lecturers and other students. At this level it is likely that they are not yet exposed to advanced learning in English compared to Level 2 students.

Table 4.12: Crosstab of Course Level * 5. English helps you to communicate with your lecturer and other students during lessons

		5. English helps you to communicate with your lecturer and other students during lessons					Total
		Definitely disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Definitely agree	
Course Level 1	Count	0	0	0	39	43	82
	% within Course Level	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	47.6%	52.4%	100.0%
Level 2	Count	0	0	3	37	82	122
	% within Course Level	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%	30.3%	67.2%	100.0%
Level 3	Count	0	3	2	49	71	125
	% within Course Level	0.0%	2.4%	1.6%	39.2%	56.8%	100.0%
Total	Count	0	3	5	125	196	329
	% within Course Level	0.0%	0.9%	1.5%	38.0%	59.6%	100.0%

Table 4.13: Chi-Square Tests for Course Level * 5. English helps you to communicate with your lecturer and other students during lessons

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.823 ^a	6	.046
N of Valid Cases	329		

4.3.2.3 BARRIERS OF ENGLISH CONSTRUCT

Unable to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English per gender

The results in Table 4.14 indicate that 8.5% of male students definitely agree that they are not able to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English, while only 1.9% of the female students definitely agree. The gender differences based on the students' perceptions resulted in a significant correlation between gender and the students' perceptions of their ability to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English as p-value in Table 4.15 is less than 0.05. The Table also shows that 21.8% of males and 20.5% of female students agree that they are not able to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English.

Table 4.14: Crosstab of Gender * 8. You are not able to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English

		8. You are not able to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English)					Total
		Definitely disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Definitely agree	
Gender Male	Count	28	70	17	36	14	165
	% within Gender	17.0%	42.4%	10.3%	21.8%	8.5%	100.0%
Gender Female	Count	34	63	28	33	3	161
	% within Gender	21.1%	39.1%	17.4%	20.5%	1.9%	100.0%
Total	Count	62	133	45	69	17	326
	% within Gender	19.0%	40.8%	13.8%	21.2%	5.2%	100.0%

Table 4.15: Chi-Square Tests for Gender * 8. You are not able to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.839 ^a	4	.028
N of Valid Cases	326		

English is an obstacle to academic performance per course

Based on the results in Table 4.17, there is a significant correlation between the course studied and students identifying English as an obstacle to their academic performance as p-value is < 0.05 . This finding concurs with Sawir et al. (2012:1) as across courses many students identified English language proficiency as an obstacle to their academic performance. The results in Table 4.16 indicate that a high percentage (50%) of the students in Hairdressing and 58.3% in Bricklaying and Plastering disagree that English is an obstacle to their academic performance, while most of the students from Clothing and Production trade agree. It should be noted that most of the students at 25% of those in Bricklaying and Plastering are not sure if English is an obstacle to their academic performance. This indicates that students who are training in courses such as Hairdressing where they have to communicate extensively with clients, may have a keener sense that English could be preventing them from performing well in academic subjects.

Table 4.16: Crosstab of Course Name * 10. You see English as an obstacle to your academic performance

		10. You see English as an obstacle to your academic performance					Total
		Definitely disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Definitely agree	
Course Office Name	Count	19	28	1	9	2	59
	% within Course Name	32.2%	47.5%	1.7%	15.3%	3.4%	100.0%
Hospitality	Count	8	18	4	6	4	40
	% within Course Name	20.0%	45.0%	10.0%	15.0%	10.0%	100.0%
Hairdressing	Count	4	8	3	0	1	16
	% within Course Name	25.0%	50.0%	18.8%	0.0%	6.3%	100.0%
Clothing & Production	Count	5	5	0	7	1	18
	% within Course Name	27.8%	27.8%	0.0%	38.9%	5.6%	100.0%
Bricklaying & Plastering	Count	3	14	6	1	0	24
	% within Course Name	12.5%	58.3%	25.0%	4.2%	0.0%	100.0%
Carpentry & Cabin Making	Count	7	14	2	5	2	30
	% within Course Name	23.3%	46.7%	6.7%	16.7%	6.7%	100.0%
Plumbing & Pipe Fitting	Count	7	15	2	9	6	39
	% within Course Name	17.9%	38.5%	5.1%	23.1%	15.4%	100.0%
Welding & Cabinet Making	Count	8	8	0	3	3	22
	% within Course Name	36.4%	36.4%	0.0%	13.6%	13.6%	100.0%
Auto Mechanics	Count	8	10	4	11	3	36
	% within Course Name	22.2%	27.8%	11.1%	30.6%	8.3%	100.0%
Electrical General	Count	17	15	1	8	5	46
	% within Course Name	37.0%	32.6%	2.2%	17.4%	10.9%	100.0%
Total	Count	86	135	23	59	27	330
	% within Course Name	26.1%	40.9%	7.0%	17.9%	8.2%	100.0%

Table 4.17: Chi-Square Tests for Course Name * 10. You see English as an obstacle to your academic performance

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	58.490 ^a	36	.010
N of Valid Cases	330		

4.3.2.4 USING OTHER LANGUAGES IN THE CLASSROOM CONSTRUCT

Home language makes it easy to understand difficult English academic terms per course

There is a significant correlation between the course studied and the students' perception that using the home language in the classroom will make it easy for them to understand difficult English academic terms as $p\text{-value} < 0.05$ in Table 4.19. The results in Table 4.18 indicate that a high percentage (47.8%) of students in Bricklaying and Plastering agree, and 30.4% definitely agree that using home languages in the classroom will make it easy for them to understand difficult English academic terms. On the other hand, 15.4% and 41% of the Hospitality students agree and definitely agree, respectively. Students from the Bricklaying and Plastering course need a high level of proficiency in home language as they are likely to work for the local community when they graduate, while Hospitality students are likely to migrate to tourism towns where proficiency in English rather than the home language is required to communicate with foreign tourists. However, the results in Table 4.18 where the majority of the Hospitality students indicate that they need "home language to make it easy to understand difficult English academic terms" contradict the results in Table 4.6 which shows the majority of the Hospitality students believe that they are fluent in English.

Table 4.18: Crosstab of Course Name * 12. Using home languages in the classroom will make it easy to understand difficult English academic terms

			12. Using home languages in the classroom will make it easy to understand difficult English academic terms					Total
			Definitely disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Definitely agree	
Course Name	Office Administration	Count	7	13	6	20	13	59
		% within Course Name	11.9%	22.0%	10.2%	33.9%	22.0%	100.0%
	Hospitality	Count	6	11	0	6	16	39
		% within Course Name	15.4%	28.2%	0.0%	15.4%	41.0%	100.0%
	Hairdressing	Count	1	3	6	5	1	16
		% within Course Name	6.3%	18.8%	37.5%	31.3%	6.3%	100.0%
	Clothing & Production	Count	3	3	2	8	3	19
		% within Course Name	15.8%	15.8%	10.5%	42.1%	15.8%	100.0%
	Bricklaying & Plastering	Count	1	3	1	11	7	23
		% within Course Name	4.3%	13.0%	4.3%	47.8%	30.4%	100.0%
	Carpentry & Cabinet Making	Count	2	1	1	12	14	30
		% within Course Name	6.7%	3.3%	3.3%	40.0%	46.7%	100.0%
	Plumbing & Pipe Fitting	Count	1	8	3	12	13	37
		% within Course Name	2.7%	21.6%	8.1%	32.4%	35.1%	100.0%
	Welding & Cabinet Making	Count	1	0	0	10	11	22
		% within Course Name	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%	45.5%	50.0%	100.0%
	Auto Mechanics	Count	3	5	4	12	10	34
		% within Course Name	8.8%	14.7%	11.8%	35.3%	29.4%	100.0%
	Electrical General	Count	4	10	9	12	11	46
		% within Course Name	8.7%	21.7%	19.6%	26.1%	23.9%	100.0%
Total		Count	29	57	32	108	99	325
		% within Course Name	8.9%	17.5%	9.8%	33.2%	30.5%	100.0%

Table 4.19: Chi-Square Tests for Course Name * 12. Using home languages in the classroom will make it easy to understand difficult English academic terms

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	64.566 ^a	36	.002
N of Valid Cases	325		

Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects per gender

Based on the results in Table 4.21, the p-value < 0.05 indicates that there is a significant correlation between gender and the students' perception that using English only in the classroom will enable all students to learn and perform better in their academic subjects. The results in Table 4.20 indicate that 50.7% of female students definitely agree that using English only as a LoLT will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects while only 36.2% of male students definitely agree. This indicates that female students value the use of English for academic purposes than the males.

Table 4.20: Crosstab of Gender * 16. Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.

		16. Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.					Total
		Definitely disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Definitely agree	
Gender Male	Count	10	15	15	55	54	149
	% within Gender	6.7%	10.1%	10.1%	36.9%	36.2%	100.0%
Female	Count	3	10	11	51	77	152
	% within Gender	2.0%	6.6%	7.2%	33.6%	50.7%	100.0%
Total	Count	13	25	26	106	131	301
	% within Gender	4.3%	8.3%	8.6%	35.2%	43.5%	100.0%

Table 4.21: Chi-Square Tests for Gender * 16. Sticking to English will everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.545 ^a	4	.049
N of Valid Cases	301		

English as a tool for students to learn and perform better in academic subjects and courses

Based on the results in Table 4.23 where $p < 0.05$, there is a correlation between the course studied and the students' perception that using English only as a LoLT will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects. The results in Table 4.22 indicate that 51.3% of the students in Plumbing and Pipe Fitting agree and 35.9% definitely agree that using English only as a LoLT will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects. On the other hand, 26.3% and 42.1% of the students in Welding and Cabinet Making agree and definitely agree, respectively. The students' perceptions on using English only as a LoLT to enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects vary from one course to the other.

Table 4.22: Crosstab of Course Name * 16. Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.

			16. Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.					Total
			Definitely disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Definitely agree	
Course Name	Office Administration	Count	3	7	6	17	21	54
		% within Course Name	5.6%	13.0%	11.1%	31.5%	38.9%	100.0%
	Hospitality	Count	1	1	3	10	22	37
		% within Course Name	2.7%	2.7%	8.1%	27.0%	59.5%	100.0%
	Hairdressing	Count	0	0	0	6	9	15

	% within Course Name	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%
Clothing & Count		0	1	0	8	9	18
Production	% within Course Name	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%	44.4%	50.0%	100.0%
Bricklaying & Count		2	1	2	11	6	22
Plastering	% within Course Name	9.1%	4.5%	9.1%	50.0%	27.3%	100.0%
Carpentry & Count		3	7	5	9	5	29
Cabinet Making	% within Course Name	10.3%	24.1%	17.2%	31.0%	17.2%	100.0%
Plumbing & Count		2	0	3	20	14	39
Pipe Fitting	% within Course Name	5.1%	0.0%	7.7%	51.3%	35.9%	100.0%
Welding & Count		1	4	1	5	8	19
Cabinet Making	% within Course Name	5.3%	21.1%	5.3%	26.3%	42.1%	100.0%
Auto Count		1	2	3	8	16	30
Mechanics	% within Course Name	3.3%	6.7%	10.0%	26.7%	53.3%	100.0%
Electrical Count		0	2	3	12	21	38
General	% within Course Name	0.0%	5.3%	7.9%	31.6%	55.3%	100.0%
Total	Count	13	25	26	106	131	301

Table 4.23: Chi-Square Tests for Course Name * 16. Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	53.063 ^a	36	.033
N of Valid Cases	301		

Analysis of lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding or will be bad for academic performance

More than one-third (39.7%) of the students acknowledge that if lecturers use home languages together with English in class their understanding will improve. This finding is based on the cross-tabulation results in Table 4.24 which show that students who agree and definitely agree that

lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding, also disagree and definitely disagree that using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance. The OVTC students share a similar view with Cummins (2007:224) who also notes that the students' high performance is associated with the frequent use of English and home language. Students will possibly be able to understand difficult English terms when such terms are translated into their home language terminology, thus enabling them to improve their performance.

Table 4.24: Crosstab of Lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding * Using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance

			15. Using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance					Total
			Definitely disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Definitely agree	
14. Lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding	Definitely disagree	Count	5	6	4	7	11	33
		% of Total	1.8%	2.2%	1.4%	2.5%	4.0%	11.9%
	Disagree	Count	1	14	2	25	8	50
		% of Total	0.4%	5.1%	0.7%	9.0%	2.9%	18.1%
	Neutral	Count	1	4	5	5	1	16
		% of Total	0.4%	1.4%	1.8%	1.8%	0.4%	5.8%
	Agree	Count	14	46	6	24	13	103
		% of Total	5.1%	16.6%	2.2%	8.7%	4.7%	37.2%
	Definitely agree	Count	25	25	2	9	14	75
		% of Total	9.0%	9.0%	0.7%	3.2%	5.1%	27.1%
Total		Count	46	95	19	70	47	277

% of Total	16.6%	34.3%	6.9%	25.3%	17.0%	100.0%
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Table 4.25: Chi-Square Tests for Lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding * Using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	70.832 ^a	16	.000
N of Valid Cases	277		

Analysis of lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding and sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects

Table 4.26 provides results which show how consistent the students are in their perceptions by cross tabulating the variables, “lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding” and “sticking to English will allow everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects”. The results indicate that only 11.3% of the students truly support the idea that if lecturers use home languages together with English in class as the LoLT (translanguaging), their understanding will improve. This finding is based on the cross-tabulation results of students’ reactions to the following statements; “lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding” and “sticking to English will allow everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects”. The contradicting perceptions that when lecturers use home languages and English students’ understanding will improve as opposed to sticking to English will result in a better student performance indicate that students are negatively correlated when those who agree are matched to those who disagree per later statements. In other words, students who supports the use of home languages together with English in class to improve understanding also disagreed that sticking to English will allow everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects. This is supported by Makalela (2015:15-20, who is in agreement that by using both two languages will be of good advantage and resourceful to students as they will have time to engage with each other.

Table 4.26: Crosstab of Lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding * Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.

				Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.					
				Definitely disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Definitely agree	Total
14. Lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding	Definitely disagree	Count	1	1	1	10	20	33	
		% of	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	3.4%	6.8%	11.3%	
	Total								
	Disagree	Count	0	2	4	28	27	61	
		% of	0.0%	0.7%	1.4%	9.6%	9.2%	20.9%	
	Total								
	Neutral	Count	0	0	2	7	7	16	
		% of	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	2.4%	2.4%	5.5%	
	Total								
	Agree	Count	7	8	13	44	33	105	
		% of	2.4%	2.7%	4.5%	15.1%	11.3%	36.0%	
	Total								
	Definitely agree	Count	4	14	6	14	39	77	
		% of	1.4%	4.8%	2.1%	4.8%	13.4%	26.4%	
	Total								
Total		Count	12	25	26	103	126	292	
		% of	4.1%	8.6%	8.9%	35.3%	43.2%	100.0%	
Total									

Table 4.27: Chi-Square Tests for Lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding * Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	38.432 ^a	16	.001
N of Valid Cases	292		

Analysis of using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance and sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects

Only one-third (36%) of the students support the use of English only as a LoLT, thus, indicating that using the home language and English as LoLTs (translanguaging) is likely to be appreciated by the majority of the OVTC students. This is based on the cross-tabulation results in Table 4.28 which shows students who agree and definitely agree with the following statements; using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance and sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects. The correlation between using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance and sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects is significant at 0.05 as displayed in Table 4.29.

Table 4.28: Crosstab of Using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance * 16. Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.

				16. Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.						
				Definitely disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Definitely agree	Total	
15. Using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance	Definitely disagree	Count	7	7	1	11	17	43		
		% of Total	2.7%	2.7%	0.4%	4.3%	6.6%	16.8%		
	Disagree	Count	3	11	9	36	34	93		
		% of Total	1.2%	4.3%	3.5%	14.1%	13.3%	36.3%		
	Neutral	Count	0	0	6	6	5	17		
		% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	2.3%	2.0%	6.6%		
	Agree	Count	0	2	3	33	23	61		
		% of Total	0.0%	0.8%	1.2%	12.9%	9.0%	23.8%		
	Definitely agree	Count	0	3	3	3	33	42		
		% of Total	0.0%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	12.9%	16.4%		
	Total		Count	10	23	22	89	112	256	
			% of Total	3.9%	9.0%	8.6%	34.8%	43.8%	100.0%	

Table 4.29: Chi-Square Tests for Using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance * 16. Sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects.

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	77.646 ^a	16	.000
N of Valid Cases	256		

Home language usage in the classroom during a lesson per home language

There is a correlation between home languages and how often students use their home languages in the classroom during a lesson as p-value < 0.05 in Table 4.31. The results in Table 4.30 indicate that more than half (52.4%) of the students speaking Otjiherero use their home language minimally in the classroom during a lesson. This result reveals that the students' use of home language in the classroom during a lesson significantly differs depending on the students' home language. However, the local/community language at OVTC is Otjiherero, thus, it is not surprising that the Otjiherero language dominates in of the survey's findings.

Table 4.30: Crosstab of Home language * Q18. How often do you use your home language in the classroom during a lesson?

			Q18. How often do you use your home language in the classroom during a lesson?					Total
			Never used	Less used	Mostly used	Often	Very often	
Home language	Oshiwambo	Count	18	65	12	5	6	106
		% within Home language	17.0%	61.3%	11.3%	4.7%	5.7%	100.0%
	Otjiherero	Count	26	109	27	23	23	208
		% within Home language	12.5%	52.4%	13.0%	11.1%	11.1%	100.0%
	Damara	Count	2	0	0	1	0	3
		% within Home language	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%	100.0%
	Silozi	Count	0	1	0	0	0	1
		% within Home language	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Afrikaans	Count	0	2	0	1	1	4
		% within Home language	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%	100.0%
	KoeKhoegowab	Count	3	1	0	0	0	4
		% within Home language	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Total	Count	49	178	39	30	30	326
		% within Home language	15.0%	54.6%	12.0%	9.2%	9.2%	100.0%

Table 4.31: Chi-Square Tests for Home language * Q18. How often do you use your home language in the classroom during a lesson?

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	32.767 ^a	20	.036
N of Valid Cases	326		

4.3.3 FINDINGS FROM OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

This section is premised on a qualitative analysis (coding and thematic) of the students' responses to the open-ended questions per each respective construct. Open-ended findings are supported by literature from other studies such as Brady et al. 2013; Terry and Yeoh 2013 & Ndjoze-Ojo 2013:150.

4.3.3.1 BENEFITS OF ENGLISH CONSTRUCT

Other Benefits of English

Students indicated other benefits of English as follows; “*English improves use of vocabularies and English opens a lot of doors in the future as it unites the nation with different countries*”. Students perceive English as an enabler to communicate with students from different ethnic groups. Furthermore, it was noted that English enabled students to have access to academic materials or resources written in English, and other useful information when using the internet. Students further indicated that, “*English gives us a clear picture of what we are learning and helps us to not feel left out in activities that help us to understand our studies*”. They also indicated that the English language gives them special knowledge and motivates them as it boosts their business communication skills. Additionally, English enables them to communicate with other people and allows them to have access to higher education institutions all over the world. This finding is supported by Brady et al. (2013:23) who observes that proficiency in the English language is seen as an advantage to access higher and vocational education. The latter findings indicate that if

translanguaging strategies are introduced, the English language should be incorporated in teaching and learning for students to benefit from global educational and work opportunities.

4.3.3.2 BARRIERS OF ENGLISH CONSTRUCT

Students at the OVTC specified other barriers of English as follows: English has many “*difficult words*” thus, affecting the students’ performance. Terry and Yeoh (2013) also underscore this argument that a language barrier is a challenge for students to use English appropriately in their research studies. Other barriers include the fact that “*some trainers cannot speak English very well,*” and English makes students feel ashamed when talking with people who are more fluent in English than them. Also, students highlighted that most of them had failed English at secondary school level and consequently, during English lessons they usually lose some information due to the language barriers. This indicates that translanguaging where both English and home language is a LoLT might eliminate many barriers of English to students’ academic progression.

4.3.3.3 USING OTHER LANGUAGES IN THE CLASSROOM CONSTRUCT

Reason on “How often do you use English in the classroom during a lesson?”

Reasons for using English more often

Students indicated the following reasons why they use English more often; “*all books and handouts are in English, and all lessons are taught in English*”. According to the OVC students, it is the only way students and trainers can communicate in class as English is the official language, thus students and trainers use it to achieve mutual understanding. The high usage of English can be attributed to a decision made by the Namibian government at independence to adopt English as an official language since it was regarded as a politically neutral language (Ndjoze-Ojo, 2013:148). Home languages are not allowed as students are from different ethnic groups (language groups) and “*class discussion involving students and trainer is conducted in English*”. Students further indicated that they learn more in English and it is easier for them to complete their tasks/homework in class. Furthermore, “*trainers do not understand all our home languages and VET unit standards are set in English*”. It was also highlighted that students use English more often in order to improve

their English communication skills. Lecturers only allow students to communicate in English during lessons. Home languages are only used for brief explanations when it is necessary. Students further stated that *“it is easy to use English than home languages to improve their academic performance”*.

Reasons for using English less often

Students indicated that they communicate more often using their home languages because some of the students are not fluent in English, especially those from marginalised communities. The latter students claim that they would understand lessons better if they were conducted in their home language. This is in line with findings by Makalela (2015:16) in his study of South African students which showed negative results in schools when they were not allowed to use their home languages. Hence, some students indicated that *“English is not my home language”*, to explain why they do not use it more often especially when socialising with students from the same language group. According to some of the OVTC students, they understand each other better in their home languages than English. One response noted: *“since most of us students at OVTC are from the same tribe we often speak in our home language”*. Other students who are not fluent in English indicated that because they fear being bullied, they end-up speaking in their home languages instead of English. There were also students who indicated that they were not used to speaking English and only communicated with their trainers in English and communicated in home languages with other students. Students also highlighted that *“English is boring”* and they struggle to speak the language, thus opting to speak in their home language. It was revealed by students that many of the trainers and students use the same home language to understand each other. Thus, one may conclude that using both English and home languages as a LoLT in a form of translanguaging is likely to be beneficial to both students and trainers.

Reasons for “How often do you use your home language in the classroom during a lesson?”

Reasons for using Home language more often

According to the OVTC students, the reasons why they use the home language more often are: they speak fluently in their home languages and *“English words are difficult sometimes compared*

to home language words". Some students indicated that they use the home language because they are proud of it and understand it better. For instance, they stated that, "*we use home languages to translate difficult English words*". The majority of the students indicated that they communicate with the trainers (who they share home languages with) in their home languages. According to the students, they are used to discussing subject topics in their home languages and they also use home languages often during group work discussions; this is where code switching (indicating a need for translanguaging) from English to home language has been beneficial to students at OVTC.

Reasons for using Home language less often

Students indicated that they use the home language less often as all lessons are taught in English. Moreover, not all students understand all home languages, thus they opt to use English since it helps them to understand difficult terms. Students further stated that they make efforts to improve their spoken and written English, hence, they use their home language less. Students also indicated that, "*home languages is considered as an unofficial language at the centre*", thus most students only speak their home language at home. They also indicated that when some students use their home languages, those who do not understand that particular language feel "*inferior or disrespected*". Students specified that there are "*trainers who do not understand all our home languages,*" so they use English instead. In addition, they highlighted that it was difficult to learn in their home languages, even though they only used their home languages when explaining difficult topics to other students. The trainers also used the home language minimally during lessons. Students further stated that "*we only revert to home language when we need to understand the lesson material better*".

What possible advantages are there to using home languages alongside English for teaching and learning?

The OVTC students indicated the following advantages for using home languages alongside English for teaching and learning; the home language usage alongside English will make students understand subject topics clearly; enhance their fluency in English and will create a bond between trainers and students. Students further indicated that, "*the communication between trainers and*

students will become easier when using English and home language". They claimed that this could increase student class participation and improve the pass rate at the centre. The immediate implication is that no student will be disadvantaged because they are less fluent in English. Students similarly stated that they will be able to effectively express themselves during lessons. In addition, the students will improve their communication skills and be able to communicate with others fluently. Furthermore, trainers will translate (a translanguaging practice) some of the difficult words from the home language to English for students to better understand certain topics, thus making teaching and learning more interesting.

4.3.3.4 STUDENT COMMENTS

According to the students, English must be used in vocational education because most companies and universities use English as a LoLT or for work purposes. They stated that *"it might be difficult for us to enter job markets if only home language is used,"* and it will be difficult to learn in the home language as the trainers were not trained in these different languages. As such, *"Each and every student needs to understand English in order to understand trainers during lessons"*. The students acknowledged that English is an official language and thus, should be compulsory to all trainees to improve learning, boost knowledge and help students understand concepts. It was also noted by these students that communicating in English can improve academic performance, and as such, they preferred using English as a LoLT instead of the home language. Based on the students' responses, English must be used mostly for communication purposes with other people who do not understand the home language(s). Since all subjects are in English, English is thus, not an obstacle to the students' learning processes.

Translating English terms into the home language will make lessons short and reduce student concentration. Also, because some trainees come from different cultural backgrounds, they might take long to learn the local home languages. According to some of these students, *"speaking English often improves our vocabulary and makes communication easier"*. This is contrary to Cummins (2007:231) who says that the use of the home language can expand the student's

vocabulary. The implication is that when students master the English language their performance in other subjects offered in English is also likely to improve.

Based on the survey responses from the students, the home language must be introduced alongside English. Using English and home languages for academic studies will enable the students to develop fully their oral, reading and writing proficiency in more than one language (Dual Language Program, 2017). This is because a student needs more time to learn in English only as a LoLT while people who learn in both home and English language need less time. Students further stated that trainers can teach in English then explain the lesson in the home language for students to understand better.

In addition, they noted that, *“home language should be used alongside English because some of us who are not good in English will have the opportunity to be educated and be successful in life”*. In other words, using the home language alongside English helps to accommodate everyone and makes it possible for students to easily help one another in the absence of the lecturer. The respondents also pointed out that home languages will improve their level of understanding and increase the pass rate. Furthermore, learning in different languages opens up their minds to and enables them to create more ideas during lessons, thus improving or making learning in English easier.

Students indicated that there is a need to socialise with other people from other ethnic groups to improve proficiency in English. Proficiency in English is important. Hwang et al. (2015), affirms that students with poor English skills are likely to feel uncomfortable, especially in group settings. Also, there is a need for Vocational training centres to provide advanced English communication skills, and not only Level 1. Students further noted that, there is a need for additional foreign languages especially in the hospitality trade since tourists come from all over the world. Every trade should have a foreign language as part of the programme.

4.4 CONCLUSION

The results from the quantitative questions revealed that, 72.5% of the 330 students agree or definitely agree that they are able to speak English fluently. Additionally, the majority of the students at 74% and 76.6%, respectively agree or definitely agree that they are able to write and communicate fluently in English. This quantitative finding corresponds to the findings from the open-ended questions (qualitative questions) in which some of the students indicated that all books and handouts are in English, and all lessons are taught in English and it is easier to use English than home languages to improve their academic performance. This indicates that with respect to academic learning, most of the students perceive themselves as more fluent in the English language than the home language since English is the LoLT at the OVTC.

The majority of the students at 98.2%, 97.5% and 93.9%, respectively, definitely agree or agree that English helps them to communicate with people who do not understand their home language; with lecturers and other students during lessons and English is useful to access information from many English academic resources. This finding is in line with the results from the open-ended questions as some students specified that trainers do not understand all their home languages and the VET unit standards are set in English. Thus, English is essential to successfully achieve effective teaching and learning. Conversely, students also indicated that not all learning and teaching takes place in English as they sometimes revert to home language when they need to understand the lesson material better.

The results from the quantitative questions revealed that between a quarter and two thirds of the students at 26%, 38.2% and 26%, respectively, agree or definitely agree that they are unable to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English, do not understand difficult academic terms in English during the lessons and also that English is an obstacle to academic performance. This finding aligns itself to results from the open-ended questions as some students are unable to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English because English words are more difficult sometimes when compared to home language words. As a result, students end up using home languages to in place

of difficult English words. Hence, following the students' views, the English language is one of the obstacles encountered in their academic performance.

The majority of the students at 64%, 82.9%, 62%, 42% and 79%, respectively agree or definitely agree to the following statements; using the home language makes it easy to understand difficult English academic terms, the translation of English texts will be useful to improve their understanding, lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding, the use of the home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance, and sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects. These findings are in line with the results from the open-ended questions in which students specified that the home language should be used alongside English to enable those who are not good in English to improve their understanding and increase their academic performance.

Some students also supported the idea that there is a need to stick to English to enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects. In addition, the students indicated that it is difficult for them to learn in their home languages as trainers will also need to be trained in different languages. This is because translating English terms to home languages will make lessons short and reduce student concentration. However, some of the students indicated that the communication between the trainers and students will become easier when using English and the home language thus, improving the students' performance.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarises the findings, concludes the study discussions and suggests recommendations to the study. The study focused on students' perceptions to determine the enabling spaces (affordances) available for translanguaging as a teaching and learning strategy. The study applied a quantitative survey research design where descriptive data was collected from a sample of 331 out of 553 students using a self-administered structured questionnaire. The study was geared to answer the following three specific research questions, namely:

- What do students' view as the benefits of using English in their academic studies?
- What are students' perceived barriers to using English in their academic studies?
- What are the possible advantages and/or disadvantages of using other languages alongside English from the students' perspective?

In chapter 4, these research questions were addressed, and the research findings and the results of the study were presented and discussed. Descriptive statistics in the form of modal values were presented and the literature from chapter 2 was applied to explain, relate, contrast and evaluate the findings of this study. The chapter summaries, study recommendations and conclusion will be subsequently presented in the sections below.

5.2 Summary of main findings

The study sample was gender neutral as well as course representative of the study population. The majority of the students who participated in the study were from the Office Administration course and represented 17.8% of the study sample. In terms of the gender survey participation ratio, 51% were males while 49% were females. More than one-third of the students at 38% were enrolled at course Level 3 while only 25% were at course Level 1. The majority of the students at 64% indicated Otjiherero as their home language.

Most of the students at 72.5% agree or definitely agree that they are able to speak English fluently. 74% agree or definitely agree that they are able to write fluently in English. 76.6% of the students agree or definitely agree that they are able to communicate fluently in English.

The majority of the students at 98.2% definitely agree or agree that English helps them to communicate with people who do not understand their home language. 97.5% of the students definitely agree or agree that English helps them to communicate with their lecturers and other students during lessons. 93.9% of the students definitely agree or agree that English is useful to access information from many English academic resources.

In addition, 60% of the students disagree that they are unable to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English, while 38.2% of the students agree or definitely agree that they do not understand difficult academic terms in English during lessons. On the other hand, the majority of the students at 67% disagree or definitely disagree that English is an obstacle to their academic performance.

Most of the students at 64% agree or definitely agree that using the home language makes it easier to understand difficult English academic terms. 82.9% of the students agree or definitely agree that translation of English texts will be useful to improve their understanding. 62% of the students agree or definitely agree that lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve their level of understanding. 51% of the students disagree or definitely disagree that using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance. 79% of the students definitely agree or agree that sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects. However, 83% of the students mostly, very often and often use English in the classroom during a lesson, and 55% of the students use home language less, while 15% never use home languages.

A high percentage (72.7%) of the students in Welding and Cabinet Making agreed that they can speak English fluently while Hospitality recorded the lowest percentage (45.0%). The majority (77.3%) of students in Welding and Cabinet Making agreed or claimed that they can write fluently

in English while Hairdressing recorded the lowest percentage (18.8%). A high percentage (62.5%) of the students in Bricklaying and Plastering agreed that they can communicate fluently in English compared to the low percentage of 44.4% of the students in Clothing and Production who agree that they are able to communicate fluently in English. Differences in speaking, writing and communicating in English per course resulted in a significant correlation at 0.05 between the course and speaking, writing and communicating fluently in English. A high percentage (63.9%) of students in Level 1 agree that they can communicate fluently in English compared to a low percentage of 40.8% of the students in Level 3 who agree. Thus, a significant (at 0.05) correlation between course level and student ability to communicate fluently in English prevailed.

There is a significant correlation at 0.05 between the course studied and the responses of the students on how English helps them to communicate with their lecturers and other students. This is due to a high percentage (73.3%) of the students in Carpentry and Cabin Making who agree or claim that English helps them to communicate with their lecturers and other students during lessons, compared to only 25.9% of the students in Office Administration who agree.

There is a significant correlation at 0.05, between the course level and the responses of students on how English helps them to communicate with their lecturers and other students. A high percentage (67.2%) of students in Level 2 definitely agree that English helps them to communicate with their lecturers and other students during lessons compared to 52.4% of the students in Level 1. A high percentage (8.5%) of male students definitely agree that they are not able to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English while only 1.9% of the female students definitely agree. These gender differences based on the students' perceptions result in a significant correlation at 0.05 between gender and the students' ability to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English.

There is a significant correlation between the course studied and students viewing English as an obstacle to their academic performance. A high percentage (50%) of the students in Hairdressing and 58.3% in Bricklaying and Plastering disagree that English is an obstacle to their academic performance while only 38.9 in Clothing and Production agree. There is a significant correlation

between the course studied and students' perception that using home languages in the classroom will make it easy for them to understand difficult English academic terms. The majority (47.8%) of the students in Bricklaying and Plastering agree and 30.4% definitely agree that using home languages in the classroom will make it easy for them to understand difficult English academic terms, while 15.4% and 41% of the Hospitality students agree and definitely agree, respectively.

There is a significant correlation between gender and students' perception that using English only in the classroom will enable all students to learn and perform better in their academic subjects. This is based on a high percentage (50.7%) of the female students who definitely agree that using English only as a LoLT will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects while only 36.2% of the male students definitely agree.

There is a correlation between the course studied and the students' perception that using English only as a LoLT will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects. For instance, a high percentage (51.3%) of the students in Plumbing and Pipe Fitting agree and 35.9% definitely agree that using English only as a LoLT will enable everybody to learn and perform better in academic subjects.

More than one-third (39.7%) of the students truly support that if lecturers use the home languages together with English in class, their understanding will improve. Only one-third (36%) of the students support the use of English only as a LoLT. There is a correlation between home languages and how often students use their home language in the classroom during a lesson. More than half (52.4%) of the students who speak Otjiherero use their home language minimally in the classroom during lessons.

In the following section, I will be answering my three research questions:

Question 1

What do students view as the benefits of using English in their academic studies?

Based on results in table 4.3.2 Almost (more than 97%), all OVTC students acknowledge that English is beneficial when it comes to social and academic communication purposes. Thus, the conclusion is that OVTC students need English to be part of a LoLT. This is also revealed by study results in table 4.3.4 which indicate that more than three quarters of the students definitely agree or agree that sticking to English will enable everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects, and almost all students (83%), mostly, very often and often use English in the classroom during a lesson.

Question 2

What are students' perceived barriers to using English in their academic studies?

Table 4.3.3. Highlights the highly perceived barrier to using English in their academic studies by students was the students' inability to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English. This is due to students' failure to understand difficult academic terms in English during lessons. Therefore, English is an obstacle to many students (more than one-quarter) when it comes to academic performance.

Question 3

What are the advantages and /or disadvantages of using other languages alongside English from the students' perspectives?

The highly perceived advantage and/or disadvantage of using other languages alongside English was that the majority of the students, view home language as beneficial since it makes it easy to understand difficult English academic terms. Students would like to have difficult English academic terms translated to home languages for them to improve their comprehension skills. The major disadvantages perceived by the students are that using both L1 and L2 might increase lesson time, and it will be costly as lecturers will need to be trained in all L1 languages.

Based on results in table 4.26, more than one-third of the students truly support that if lecturers use home languages together with English in class their understanding will improve. Only one-third of the students support the use of English only as a LoLT. Hence, the study concludes that one in four students supports the implementation of translanguaging at OVTC. Consequently, lecturers should consider using home languages to assist in clarifying terms in class so that all students feel accommodated in the lecture.

5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was only limited to students at the OVTC, meaning not all VTCs were eligible to participate in the study to have a national representation of the students' views on the topic of Translanguaging in VET education. The study results are based on the students' perceptions and no tests were done to measure the students' abilities; for instance, the students' English communication skills were not assessed. There is a possibility of students to over or under rate themselves in terms of their English communication skills. The study is only one sided as only the OVTVTC students were targeted by the research and lecturers were not part of the study. Hence, there are still gaps which were supposed to be filled by feedback from trainers or lecturers, but due to limited funding, the study only collected feedback from the students.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.4.1 Recommendations

Based on the current study results, OVTC is advised to continue using English as a LoLT as many students at OVTC value the benefits of English in their academic performance. There is also a need for OVTC to consider conducting a pilot study to examine the possibility of translanguaging levels using L1 and L2 for academic purposes. For instance, OVTC students could be provided with study guides with translated difficult English academic terms into L1. This recommendation is in line with study results that more than one-third of the students acknowledge the benefits of using L1 alongside English. The translanguaging pilot study is likely to provide insights to be used to eliminate the barriers of using only English as a LoLT such as the students' inability to discuss

topics in detail during lessons in English. Findings from this feasibility study could also be used by the NTA or Ministry of Higher Education to recommend or not recommend translanguaging at VET level.

5.4.2 Suggestions for further research

There is a need to assess the trainers' perceptions on Translanguaging. This will expose the challenges which trainers might experience when using the home language and English language as a LoLT.

There is a need to conduct a Translanguaging impact pilot study to assess the impact of using home and English languages as a LoLT to determine the performance of students before considering the implementation of translanguaging at OVTC. Such a study could establish a true student and lecturer support base for the possible the introduction of translanguaging at OVTC. A detailed study which explores the challenges associated with using multiple languages as LoLT need to be implemented. The results of such a study will inform the feasibility of translanguaging at VET level.

5.5 CONCLUSION

More than three quarters of the students indicated that they possess the necessary English communication skills required for their studies. Thus, the study concludes that more than one third of OVTC students do not possess all English communication skills required for their studies. The perceptions on student English communication skills vary per course of study. For example, the Welding and Cabinet Making students rated themselves higher than other students from other trades.

In conclusion, the major benefits of English revealed by the students at OVTC are as follows: to allow inclusive education to take place at OVTC as not all lecturers are fluent in the L1 of all students. Using English as a LoLT, enables students to have access to global academic materials which in the end enables them to improve their academic performance.

The minority of the students at OVTC experienced the following barriers of using English for academic purposes: English has many difficult academic terms which are not easily understood by students. Hence, students struggle to discuss topics in detail to fully understand their subject topics and concepts. As a result, the students' academic performance is below the expected standard.

The main benefit articulated by the students for using home languages together with English in class is that the use of L1 and L2 will improve their understanding, leading to better teaching and learning at OVTC. According to the students, this will lead to better academic performance outcomes.

The students specified the main disadvantage of using L1 and L2 as a LoLT as follows: translanguaging will require a lot of resources to achieve effective implementation; currently no academic materials exist in L1 and lecturers will be required to be extensively trained in L1 for them to effectively teach in both L1 and L2.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

OVTC Student English and Translanguaging Perception Survey for 2018

Course: _____

Home language: _____

Gender: Male Female

Please indicate with a X in the appropriate box with how you agree or disagree with the below statement(s)	Definite ly agree	Agree e	Disagree	Definite ly disagree	Neutral
English communication skills					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are able to speak English fluently. You are able to write fluently in English. You are able to communicate fluently in English. 					
Benefits of English					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English helps you communicate with people who don't understand your language English helps you to communicate with your lecturer and other students during lessons English is useful because you are able to access information from many English academic resources. Other specify _____ 					
Barriers of English					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are not able to discuss topics in detail during lessons in English. You don't understand difficult academic terms in English during lessons. You see English as an obstacle to your academic performance. Other specify _____ 					
Using other languages in the classroom					

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using home languages in the classroom will make it easy to understand difficult English academic terms. • Translation of English texts will be useful to improve my understanding. • Lecturers using home languages together with English in class will improve understanding. • Using home languages together with English in class will be bad for academic performance. • Sticking to English will everybody to learn and perform better in their academic subjects. 					
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--

- How often do you use English in the classroom during a lesson?

Often Very often Less used Mostly used Never

used

Reason _____

- How often do you use your home language in the classroom during a lesson?

Often Very often Less used Mostly used Never

used



Reason _____

- What possible advantages are there to using languages alongside of English for teaching and learning?

- Any comments or questions?

Thank you for taking time to complete this questionnaire

APPENDIX B: APPROVAL OFFER LETTER

 NAMIBIA TRAINING AUTHORITY	 OKAKARARA VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE P/Bag 2112, Fax: 067-317469
23 May 2018	

Ms. Memory Tembwe
P O Box 951
Ngweze
Namibia

Dear Ms. Tembwe,


RE: APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY AT OKAKARARA VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE

Okakarara Vocational Training Centre (OVTC), hereby acknowledge receiving your letter for permission to conduct your research study titled "Possibilities for translanguaging in Vocational Training: Students perceptions at Okakarara Vocational Training Centre".

It is with great pleasure to grant permission to conduct your research study at our centre, as it will contribute positively to the centre and Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector at large. This study is highly commendable as it will bring new knowledge which will determine the affordances available for translanguaging as a teaching and learning strategy.

On behalf of Okakarara Vocational and Training Centre, I would like to wish you success in your studies.

Yours in Education,


Mr. Penson Mootu
Centre Manager

NAMIBIA TRAINING AUTHORITY
OKAKARARA VOCATIONAL
TRAINING CENTRE

23 MAY 2018

CENTRE MANAGER
TEL: 067 - 317069
FAX: 067 - 317469
PRIVATE BAG 2112, OKAKARARA

APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT FORM



UNIVERSITEIT • STELLENBOSCH • UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT: **The possibilities of translanguaging in Vocational Training: Student perceptions at Okakarara Vocational Training Centre.**

REFERENCE NUMBER: 19714327

RESEARCHER: *MEMORY LUBASI TEMBWE*

ADDRESS: *Faculty of Education, Curriculum Studies, University of Stellenbosch*

CONTACT NUMBER: 0812227807

Dear Student

My name is **MEMORY LUBASI TEMBWE** and I am doing my master's degree at **Stellenbosch University**. I would like to invite you to participate in a research project entitled "**The possibilities of translanguaging in Vocational Training: Student perceptions at Okakarara Vocational Training Centre**".

Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project and contact me if you require further explanation or clarification of any aspect of the study. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to decline to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part.

The purpose for you to engage in this exercise is to gather your perception in terms of benefits and barriers to using English in your academic studies and explore the possibility of using more than one language in learning and teaching. When you will participate in this survey questionnaire do not be scared of any risks and discomfort because the questions do not focus on intimate personal information. The potential benefits for participating in this survey is that you will have a better understanding of using more than one language in teaching and learning. A token of appreciation (10.00 air time) will be awarded to student for their committed time and willingness to answering the questionnaire.

The information that you will provide in the questionnaire will be treated confidential and only be disclosed only with your permission or as require by law. There are no names that will be used on

the questionnaire while the data you will be safely stored on the protected computer and appropriate system will be used. Take note that your participation in this survey questionnaire is voluntary to an extent that you may withdraw at any time without harm. During the completion of the questionnaire if you find a difficult question that you may not answer, you can leave it but you still remain in the study but if circumstances arise I have a right to withdraw you from this exercise.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact:

MEMORY LUBASI TEMBWE
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RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS: You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.
You have right to receive a copy of the Information and Consent form.

If you are willing to participate in this study please sign the attached Declaration of Consent and *(hand it to the investigator)*

Your Sincerely

MEMORY TEMBWE
Principal Investigator